

# The Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies

A Festschrift in Honor of William F. Pinar

Edited by  
Mary Aswell Doll

# The Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies

This collection of noted scholars introduces the reader to the range of ways that reconceptualization has transformed, and will continue to transform, the field of curriculum studies. Those who have wrestled with the implications of reconceptualization are provoked to carry our conversations into new territory.

**Peter Appelbaum**, Arcadia University, USA

In this volume scholars from around the world consider the influential work of William F. Pinar from a variety of “conversations” his ideas have generated. The major focus is on the *what*, *why*, and *how* of the word *reconceptualization*, which involves engaging critically and ethically as public intellectuals with gender, class, and race issues theorized in a variety of disciplines. The book introduces Pinar’s seminal argument for curriculum to return to its root in the word *currere* (the running of the course of study) and its key concepts: autobiography as alternative to the denial of subjectivity in traditional curriculum studies, study, and place. Issues addressed include the ethics of study both of self and of the discipline of curriculum studies, the politics of presence, the curricular importance of entering the public sphere, the openness to complicating simple solutions, and the ethical dealing with alterity (the state of being other or different; otherness).

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A Festschrift in Honor  
of William F. Pinar

**Edited by Mary Aswell Doll**



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William F. Pinar

# Preface

Like the writers in this volume, I have long felt a debt of gratitude to Bill Pinar for his interest in my work, publishing me in *The Journal of Curriculum Theorizing* (JCT) when I was beginning a career in teaching. He opened spaces in educational discourse for my background in literature and myth during those festive Octobers when JCT hosted the Bergamo Conferences. The remarkable people I met there, through Bill Doll and Bill Pinar, were not like the ones I saw at the Modern Language Association conferences, where I was told that I was not specialized enough, too interdisciplinary. For me—as for the writers in this volume—Bill’s vision of what constitutes curriculum studies is cutting edge, which means interdisciplinary and intellectual. As such, his reconceptualization of the field embraces many different focal points such as you will find in the pages of this book. You will also find a recurring theme, which insists that a prime study by the student and the scholar must be the self. Curriculum studies is not just about subjects, but about subjectivity. In studying books, we study ourselves, meeting the others within, whom our culture tells us we must regulate. *Currere* (the root of curriculum) becomes a project of forward thinking, disrupting those educational “deforms” like standardization that stifle social change.

Bill Pinar’s theorizing is essential for teachers at all levels of pedagogical interaction. Committed to the teaching act as a high order for intellectual work, Bill’s efforts have been directed toward understanding curriculum as a means for unearthing the original self that should not and cannot be standardized. The rationale for this collection of twenty-three essays is thus to further explicate what such “understanding” implies for the various areas of his concerns: disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, internationalization, education as lived experience, gender and queer theory, racial politics and violence, the concept of place, and always, the return of the field of curriculum studies to its social, critical, theorized, historical base.

Each writer was asked to focus on one or more of Bill’s contributions, with an emphasis on how those areas have influenced his or her own work. The chapters are arranged alphabetically by author, together forming what Bill has termed a “complicated conversation,” one idea being nuanced by another’s. Accordingly, Tero Autio offers a history of the problem of neoliberal

reforms that adhere to a market state ideology. Pinar's reforms offer a corrective to this shift by upholding the particularity and diversity of the real subject. Denise Taliaferro Baszile writes of the emotional affect recent police brutality issues raise for her, as a hearkening back to the first time she knew of the lynching of Emmett Till. Denise credits Bill's book on lynching and prison rape as a crucial read that connects what no one talks about: race and gender as an affair between men. Alan A. Block offers Pinar's theory of *currere* as a rebuke to the "insanity" of schooling with its overemphasis on rationality, normalcy, and conformity: enforced socialization. Deborah P. Britzman calls Pinar's work on queer theory a "gift" for education. The challenge of *currere*, especially for the homoerotic curriculum is to interpret "illegible emotions" of desire, so as to recover the inside story and restore felt experience. Terrance R. Carson observes that the American discourse on reconceptualization, having been usurped by business interests, is, according to Pinar, a "nightmare," unlike in Canada, where Pinar's appointment as a Tier One Canada Research Chair indicates a breakthrough for the Canadian interdisciplinary curriculum. Brian Casemore addresses the notion of subjective emplacement to determine how regional histories and traumas shape our personal and national psyche. The untold stories of Othering need to be consciously addressed in the literal and psychic work of renovation. Mary Aswell Doll compares Pinar's theory of *currere* with the work of depth psychologist James Hillman, both urging a downward, inward process of self-reflection—a kind of archeological "dig"—that unearths the shards of one's past so as to be unencumbered by false norms. William E. Doll, Jr. suggests that Pinar's quest to find a method for self-exploration is similar to that of Edward Morin, a French sociologist, who, like Pinar, encourages understanding of one's personal experience with chaos and uncertainty, so as to produce curricular as well as life insights. Peter P. Grimmert suggests that "complicated conversation" introduces a way of developing understanding of current complex issues, especially with alterity. Pinar's word *study* disrupts normative views in favor of focusing on a "spot in time." Madeleine R. Grumet refutes the neo-Marxist claims that economy and social class are more important curriculum issues than subjectivity. *Solidarity* reduces the subject's ability as a thinker in the demand for conformity. Petra Munro Hendry redefines the terms *public* and *intellectual*, currently under attack, to argue for Pinar's theories of *currere*, cosmopolitanism, and complicated conversation, which are central to what it means to be a public intellectual. Rita L. Irwin recounts her own artistic process as living pedagogy that is not object centered, but is intimately involved in those liminal spaces between presence and absence, personal and professional. Janet L. Miller's personal history with many of the figures of influence on Pinar's life demonstrates the intellectual enlivening effect conversation has on complicating thought. Her "memory wash" honors the work of curriculum theory as a set of relations among interdisciplinarity, passion, and internationalization, all the while affirming the practice of love and the need to always "transform anew." Marla Morris

describes how Pinar's work on disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity has been a paradigm shift for curriculum studies by his insistence that scholars need to know the history of their own field in a dialectical relation with their own lived condition. Theory and subjectivity offer two directions, vertically and horizontally, for scholars to engage in the "voyage out" toward ever-new forms of knowledge. Nicholas Ng-A-Fook asks what does it mean for international hyphen-ated subjectivities when they remain silent and transparent, when the hyphen becomes a thorn? The concept of *currere* offers a way to make interstices at the margins. José Augusto Pacheco recounts Pinar's work to internationalize, but not globalize, understanding of curriculum work, so as to complicate the conversations surrounding identity, a term that needs to be freed from external pressures and unexamined premises. Curriculum as social psychoanalysis offers a critique of heteronormativity, a necessary challenge to any in a church-dominated culture. Celeste Snowber comments on Pinar's phrase, "the self becomes flesh in the word," by remarking that her poetry and dance become footnotes of another kind. The interchanging of boundaries between human and natural worlds gives significance for the arts to become places of inquiry. Maria Luiza Süsskind notes that in Brazil Marxist critical theorists claim that politics is the "only" answer to curriculum. In contrast, Pinar's work in internationalization is making inroads, challenging the scientific positivism with nuanced replies and scholarship. Peter M. Taubman offers an extensive rebuke to neoliberal reforms for education, wherein the human "disappears" beneath the categories imposed. If the final performance of learning must be visible and measurable, the fluidity and shimmering quality of what makes us human "vaporizes" under the male gaze. Donna Trueit explores Pinar's term "complicated conversation" as nested with several other key Pinar concepts, like subjectivity, cosmopolitanism, and internationalization, all of which require relationship. Conversations on the world stage can be experienced, attuned, or engaged with even at a later date, such as what Pinar's appreciation for Jane Addams demonstrates with her new thinking about older social abstractions. Hongyu Wang writes as a stranger-listener when attending international conferences, maintaining an ethical posture of respectful distance. Internationalization is not just the study of nations but also an inquiry into the nations within one's self. Reta Ugena Whitlock draws on Pinar's queering of the Biblical story of Noah in the tent and the Curse of Canaan, which shatters traditional God-talk. Queering the theological text entails reclaiming the Word to include gender non-conformity and queer desire, a project that invites speaking more radically about what it means to love. Zhang Hua relates how, as a guest in Pinar's home, he was able to observe *currere* in action: reading, writing, thinking, conversing. Pinar's phrase "complicated conversation" was demonstrated by the two scholars embracing the alterity of their world cultures.

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# 1 “Holding Tight against the Tide”

## The Problem of Instrumentalism

*Tero Autio*

I met William Pinar about twenty years ago in the Curriculum and/or Didaktik Conference in Oslo, Norway, and since then, we have been close colleagues and friends. Within fifteen minutes of coffee table discussion, despite our different geographical, cultural and educational differences, we recognized our kindred spirit about how we think and could think about curriculum issues. Since then, I have benefited from Bill's unparalleled erudition always in process by incessant study, from his unbreakable flow of ideas and his intra- and interpersonal intelligence, his unwavering support and friendship, his tactful and diplomatic skills, always spiced by his uniquely brilliant sense of humor. I would like to honor my great friend Bill “my way” by introducing some of my historical and theoretical ideas how I have understood Bill's unique and constantly transforming contributions to curriculum theory.

We are living in times that have lost any intellectual or political sense of education in terms of “complicated conversation” as it was conceived in classical antiquity. The general political atmosphere in most of the Western world is suffering a kind of euphoria after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The euphoria reached the measures where the social and cultural evolution of liberal market democracy was declared the winner in the competition for the best available blueprint for democratic societies and an argument for a globalized world as a unitary wholeness tied together by market forces as a basis for politics, morals and education alike. The elevation of market forces as the guiding beacon for all social action, politics and education was prophetically expressed by one of the main architects of neoliberalism, the former UK Prime Minister in her speech at the end of 1970s when she radically redefined capitalism and its undergirding, initially Christian, ethics (see Max Weber) by a secularized, non-Biblical, de-spiritualized, primitively pragmatic concept of ethics and morals.

Capitalism encourages important virtues, like discipline, industriousness, prudence, reliability, conscientiousness, and a tendency to save in order to invest in the future. [Capitalism is replacing biblical values because] *it*

*is not material goods but all the great virtues exhibited by individuals working together that constitute what we call the market place.*

(Autio, 2006, pp. 152–153, italics added for emphasis)

It seems now that a revolutionary political turn is eating its own offspring; capitalism herself is seemingly in deep crisis in its assumed task to organize a democratic society and the wellbeing of people. The worst victims of the neoliberal reformed, post-Soviet capitalism in the West are mainly youth and disadvantaged people. Further, it is increasingly recognized that Western economy, politics and education are mutually complicit in the crisis: neoliberalism is destroying the basic elements of democracy in the name of market liberalism, with its conscious indifference to economic and social inequality and growing poverty. The education acronym GERM, Global Education Reform Movement, seems indeed to be the virus that is killing education (Sahlberg, 2011). Neoliberal democracy is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms; neoliberalism means a dismissal of democracy with a pervasive and excessively instrumental and calculative rationality, where the political vision is profitability and cost–benefit effectiveness without any further consideration of social and economic conditions for sustainable living.

The implications and consequences of these quite recent world political phenomena have been thoroughgoing and radical for the world of education. My conviction is that we cannot, as educationists, really understand what is our current state of education without taking into account the dynamics of the world political picture with its present loss of political alternatives and utopias. The entrenched Culture of Method (Autio, 2006) in education (in mainstream research as well as a core of teacher education curricula and as a core image of neoliberal conception of teaching) is structurally, institutionally and intellectually screening off the bigger historical, theoretical and political panoramas as vital elements of educational erudition, wisdom and understanding. Theoretically, the educationalization of the Cold War in the United States also marked a decisive shift “from psychology to philosophy, from a popular interpretation of pragmatism to cognitive psychology that was at its outset in the late 1950s—cognition theory being the most important academic reference of PISA today, as the stakeholders admit themselves” (Tröhler, 2013, p. 201).

In the United States, there has been a long battle throughout the twentieth century between educational progressivism and educational instrumentalism. But we need to understand the long and strong European roots in American thinking to make the developments more intelligible. John Dewey (1859–1952) was a classic advocate of progressivism in education; Dewey was Hegelian just like Karl Marx (1818–1883) before him. They both were monumental thinkers yet critical about German Idealism that together with the cultural, artistic and literary circles of the time created an influential intellectual German late-Enlightenment movement called *Deutsche Bewegung* (German Movement) around 1770–1830 (Klafki, 1991). The ideal aim

of this philosophical and aesthetic movement was explicitly educational in a broad sense: to create a democratic civic society by *Bildung*, by education, where the educated public would guarantee the enlightened aspirations of democracy. Democracy and education would be inseparably intertwined in that intellectual, political, aesthetic and education movement. Only against that noble and most worthwhile initiative can we understand the shame, guilt and frustration among Germans as to what the totalitarian Nazi regime brought about while brutally crushing the democratic cause and showing how delicate and vulnerable a thing democracy is in practice. The prominent German social theorist Jürgen Habermas has remarked that the German national identity has been "irreversibly tainted since the Holocaust" (Autio, 2009, p. 18). Still, maybe no other nation has made so conscious an effort to cope with her tragic past as Germany in rebuilding democracy after fascism. But it seems that education and curriculum theorizing have been hit much harder in the aftermath of fascism. It seems to be the task of others to reactivate the political and ethical *Bildung* that echoed original Western ideals initially articulated in Athens by Plato and Aristotle and in Jerusalem by the teachings of Jesus and his disciples of Christianity—but also Oriental wisdom traditions—now living a renaissance in China (see Pinar, 2013).

The European Enlightenment owes an irreplaceable intellectual debt to Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) as an instigator of Modern Education as a political project (see Tröhler, 2013). Legacies of the Enlightenment have remained to live and be reactivated in other demographic and intellectual locales: in John Dewey's democratic and progressive contributions to American education in modern times and in William Pinar's insightful and close readings of postmodern times. Bill's intellectually appealing contributions include the turn to reconceptualize and internationalize the field of curriculum studies against psychological instrumentalism and its later economic embodiment in neoliberal globalization. I see Bill's long-perspective contributions particularly in the Deweyan spirit of "Democracy and Education" as a defense of the democratic cause "against the tide that threatens everything." In Bill's approaches, the reader can discover refined sensitivities that challenge the notions of liberal democracy cherished in the Western world based on universalism, pragmatism and positivism. Bill has honed his political sense and ethical sensitivity in his series of *Curriculum Studies: Intellectual Histories and Present Circumstances* in Mexico, South Africa, Brazil, United States and most recently in China. In these exchanges with different countries, Bill reconceptualizes the "learning theories" of the psychologized curriculum and its political equivalent: the abstract subject of liberalist political theory as a powerful resource for colonization. These abstractions work as rhetorical political devices only and do not actualize the dynamics between psyche and society. In political terms, Bill's introduction of postmodern approaches into the field of curriculum theory complicates the unitary subject advocated by liberal democracy and the likewise unitary, unspecified humanist subject of North European *Bildung/Didaktik* discourse.



I view Bill's zooming in for the concrete intricacies and diversity of the real subject—one instance of his more general methodology of the “primacy of the particular” and “working from within”—as providing vital resources for updating education and democracy beyond its Western/Northern biases and suggesting articulations for subjugated and subaltern knowledges and practices as well. The inclusion of the silenced voices and colonized minds on the agenda of curriculum theory and studies revitalizes the significance of education for democracy; ideally and theoretically, democracy is the site for the actualization of every human potential.

In Bill's thinking, “The Recurring Question of the Subject” is vitally linked to politics in terms of unstable and contested dynamics of “subjective transformation and social reconstruction.” In that sense, Bill is rearticulating in the postmodern and international context both the *Bildung/Didaktik* tradition as well as Dewey's modernist and pragmatist coordinates for education and democracy. The index of Bill Pinar's own intellectual insistence for perpetual transformation is his perceptive observation of the exhaustion of critical theory and such poststructural concepts as *discourse, identity and power*. Each of these curriculum conceptions, he writes,

are no longer conceptual innovations or provocations precisely due to their taken-for-grantedness . . . these concepts circulate as accepted truths—even the poststructuralist truth that there is no truth!—and have thus become abstractions split-off from the concrete complexity of the historical moment. Split-off, they do not link us to the present and can no longer provide passages to the future. In their triumph they become markers of our defeat: our expulsion from the public sphere.

(Pinar, 2013, p. 7)

The topology of Bill's curriculum theorizing in terms of horizontality and verticality is an effort to overcome the tendency toward totalization that the triad—power, discourse and identity—imply. Similarly, the preceding concepts of Reproduction and Resistance of Critical Theory “assume a cognitive and political superior standpoint of the academic *intelligentsia* in order to be able to renounce all the deviations from the grand narrative of emancipation” (Autio, 2006, p. 146). In this view, critical theory appears as another ideology of objective knowledge and science in its abstract foundational compulsion for the Archimedean standpoint detached from the particular material and epistemic circumstances.

The methodological topology that combines the present, horizontality, with the intellectual history of the past, verticality, is one of the keys to overcome the presentist understanding what we experience now and what the methodologies of mainstream empirical social sciences support in their preference of survey over theory. For Bill, writing is method, the working of “from within,” recognizing the significance of the past, the meaning of the present and the expectation of a future as “complicated conversation.”

Bill's most recent strategy in his efforts to understand educational experience in the interconnected world and beyond standardizing economic globalization is the internationalization of curriculum studies. The internationalization of curriculum studies orchestrated has meant opening space for a different vocabulary of educational experiences in Brazil, China, Mexico, South Africa and United States. Internationalization can provide scholars with a critical and intellectual distance from their own local cultures and from those standardizing processes of globalization that national cultures and individuals have to meet. The lessons of internationalization that the critical distance such conversation entails enables understanding of one's own situation and the situations of one's colleagues. Particularly, from a Euro-American point, the history of domination and colonizing—now often in the form of globalization—and their educational and curriculum vehicles—standardization, accountability and privatization—are legacies of instrumentalism, anti-intellectualism and hidden colonial embodiments of the Euro-American logocentric subject.

The knowledge–power mindset as the core curriculum of the nation making is embodied in present Anglophone accountability, standardization and privatization movements in education with very few exceptions of that global rule. Despite their claimed “psychological” profile—against the morally and intellectually scandalous void of the concept of the subject and consciousness—externalized and reified notions of human psyche in behavioral-cognitive theories as kinds of a-psychological psychologies have been complicit in the corporatization of education in present official education policies. The collapse of the USSR with the disappearance of any competing big political visions strengthened the instrumental and method-driven, “evidence-based” orientation in politics and education and its research. The most glaring example from the United States is efforts at the federal level to legislate “correct” scientific method (Lather, 2013, p. 38). The economic and managerial stress on education, in the name of globalization, draws on political demands for uniformity, toward colonization and standardization of all spheres of human action instead of heterogeneity, difference and diversity as drivers of democracy.

The curriculum of nation making has arguably reached the point where *economic thought is coterminous with rationality and the concept of neoliberal democracy is an oxymoron* (Couldry, 2012). Accordingly, the nation state is a unit of measurement in international competitions in the economy and instrumental education rather than the site of democracy and democratic education. Yet, the shift from the nation state to the “market state” as an aspired global model of society, education and curriculum as one of its vehicles, may nevertheless be not erasing nationalism. It is argued that “there is every reason to assume that nationalism, at least in the near future, will endure, despite all the attempts by politicians and scholars to herald the start of a post-national period. The multipolarity of nations is too deeply embedded in Western political culture to be removed from it within a few decades. And this is the

situation we have to deal with, whether we like it or not” (Hirschi, 2013, p. 220).

Against this background, the case of China is most interesting. We can argue that China, because of its hugely long and amazingly variegated phases of history is as much a nation state as it is a *civilization state*. Due to the weight of history, as exposed throughout in those very informative accounts in *Curriculum Studies in China*, democratization takes cultural forms, as Zhang Hua (Pinar, 2014) emphasizes. The reactivated legacy of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism through curriculum studies without the obsessive quest for certainty and ultimate foundations like the postmodern scholarship of Zhang Wenjun (Pinar, 2014) proves, will arguably reactivate also the European educational landscape. The violent Western colonization of education by accountability, standardization and privatization measures has been exhausting the project of the Enlightenment and its democratic drivers: liberty, equality and solidarity. Neoliberal democracy is an oxymoron indeed. The reactivated great Chinese wisdom traditions, in cultural-political tandem, are really invoked to address the cultural, political, ecological and economic crisis the current mode of capitalism camouflaged as democracy creates. The reform in China for quality education coded as creativity, innovation and academic freedom to teach seems to me at the same time very familiar and astonishing. In Finland, my country of origin, philosophy, arts, and teacher education are still closely intertwined against the authoritative efforts of scientism in terms of empirical (psychological and sociological) science. My bold claim is that Finland’s success in basic education is more dependent on the tradition of “pedagogic artistry” (Henderson, 2015) than its academization by misguided empiricist tradition. One of the main claims of *Bildung/Didaktik* maintains that the highest stage of self-awareness is reached through art. The Finnish national philosopher Johan Wilhelm Snellman (1806–1881) whose insistence on freedom, democracy and broad-based erudite personality against the shallow scientification of education in terms of educational psychology still matters in Finnish education and teacher education. On the scale like China, as a citizen of a minor country, I am used to think that education systems in superpowers are through their systemic interests unintentionally more inclined to wasting talents and human experience, standardizing and normalizing people than attuned to actualizing the potential of all people—the core idea of education and democracy since Antiquity.

Against these observations, the determined efforts in China for quality education against the Western mainstream as proclaimed by the official government agencies in China represent a real spark of hope—the contrasts with the West—as William Pinar (2014) notices—with the West’s dogged determination to destroy creativity, innovation and academic freedom—could not be sharper. In that sense, it is easy to join again with Bill Pinar’s concluding sentence in our China book project: “Reconstructing the past and recontextualizing concepts imported from abroad, supported by its distinctive and dynamic field of curriculum studies, China is recasting the

character of curriculum" (Pinar, 2014, p. 241). I cannot resist the temptation to add in the same spirit and for the reasons I can intuit on the basis of our collaboration in the book project and my incurable love of big pictures: if the urgently needed second Enlightenment since the first one, the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Enlightenment, as a huge pedagogic project and social reconstruction is still available to humankind, it may start in China. In this panoramic intellectual history, Bill Pinar's monumental international contribution as an emerging and ongoing intellectual synthesis, as a Third between and beyond Anglophone Curriculum and European *Didaktik*, informed by them, but *aufgehoben* will open vistas for democratic, sustainable futures for education worth of its name.

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## 2 Haunting Revelations

### Teaching Amidst the Ruins of Race, Gender, and Violence

*Denise Taliaferro Baszile*

No, I was not Bill Pinar's student. If I had a dollar for every time I said that to someone, I'd be rich, really rich. Hardly a second lapses before surprise and sometimes confusion registers on the face of the receiver of such news. And that is then followed by two or three rounds of, "Oh I thought you were Pinar's student, hunh." Another few seconds after this ritual, I then go on to explain: "Although I was not technically Bill's student," I say, "I was certainly a student of Bill's." He planted many seeds that have grown up like trees in my life, rooted, slowly evolving, and flowering. But even now when I think about our teaching/learning relationship, I am not sure *planted* is exactly the right word, because it implies the kind of serious and committed intentionality reserved for a protégé, maybe. So that's not exactly right.

What seems more accurate is to say that I think about the trajectory of my life as a series of critical moments. Dr. Phil—yes the Dr. Phil—defines a critical moment as a moment after which you are distinctly different than you were before that moment, but that distinction is only knowable in hindsight. So when I look back, I can easily say that Pinar was a key player in many of those moments, particularly in my intellectual life. Those moments were sometimes a simple reminder that my voice mattered and others times, a profound revelation that inspired me to make sense of and to speak my own truth. Those moments were sometimes like little twinkles of light in the midst of everyday conversations, or other times, they emerged slowly and sometimes painfully through long, recursive engagements with Pinar's ideas. I have tried to capture here my particularly long and messy engagement with *The Gender of Racial Politics and Violence in America*.

#### Introduction

It seemed to me that haunting was precisely the domain of turmoil and trouble, that moment . . . when things are not in their assigned places, when cracks and rigging are exposed, when people who are meant to be invisible show up without any sign of leaving, when disturbed feelings cannot be put away, when something else, something different from before, seems like it must be done. It is this sociopolitical-psychological state to which haunting referred.

(Gordon, 2008)

I believe in ghosts. They are everywhere lingering, meddling, taunting, disrupting, and haunting the present moment. I can't see them of course, but I can certainly feel their presence around things and in things. These ghosts are not necessarily troubled and wandering souls; they are not necessarily dead people who don't know they are dead; they are actually the remnants of ideas, the residue of trauma, or once life altering phenomena or events that no longer reside in the palpable present but have faded into the things around us and in us, now only perceivable by those who seek to know beyond the rational.

My work often calls on me to recognize hauntings and to confront ghosts, most particularly ghosts that remind, replay, recapitulate, re-present, and reproduce the trauma of the ever-present racialized past. In *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination*, Gordon (2008) not only insists that haunting is a fundamental part of social life, but also declares that if indeed we are interested in making things better, more just, then we must "confront the ghostly aspects" (p. 6) of social life. In *The Threat of Race*, David Theo Goldberg (2009) also intimates the power of lingering ghosts. In his efforts to interrogate the commitment of some to do away with the term *race*, Goldberg asks:

What residues of racist arrangement and subordination—social, economic, cultural, psychological, legal, and political—linger unaddressed and repressed in the singularly stressing racial demise? What doors are thus closed to coming to terms with historical horrors racially inscribed, and what attendant expressions of racial grief and group melancholia, on one side, and racial self-assertion and triumphalism, on the other side, are left unrecognized?

(p. 1)

The residues to which Goldberg refers are the ghosts that Gordon (2008) describes as "pregnant with unfulfilled possibility, with something to be done that the wavering present is demanding" (p. 183). "This something to be done," she goes on to explain, "is not a return to the past but a reckoning with its repression in the present, a reckoning with that which we have lost, but never had" (p. 183).

To teach/learn about race and racism and its entanglement with gender, sexuality, and other marked subjectivities is to recognize hauntings and to reckon with ghosts that are indicative of our ever-present past. And to do so, it is quite necessary to move beyond the typical and the typically rational ways we have sought to see, to understand, and to address race and racism—as systemic, institutionalized and/or as individual behavior—and only there when one can actually see it.

For me, trying to both recognize and yet intervene on rational representations of race/racism as data, facts, evidence, laws, policies, individual proclivity, and/or practices has made teaching about race/racism in classrooms, in

community spaces, and in boardrooms infinitely challenging, insightful, and sometimes profoundly disappointing. These places, of course, save maybe the community, are places of reason, places that call upon us to order our thoughts accordingly, to be objective, and clear/linear in our thinking or at least our expression of it. These are not places for things we perceive to be irrational—things like feelings and ghosts. And yet they are there nevertheless, revealing connections, patterns, unhealed wounds, and calling on us to do *something*.

The ghosts that are haunting me/us in the present moment have resurfaced by way of Ferguson, Missouri, and they are the impetus for my latest undoing. I have pieces of ideas and memories wondering and wandering around in my head and my heart, yelling, screaming, conspiring, resisting like unruly children locked in a room. There is also this dull but persistent ache and angst at the center of my knowing. I have tried already several times, against my better judgment, to line these things up, analyze them, build connections between them, and articulate them in the powerful lesson my students so desperately need as they too are restless and wanting. But I have nothing yet. Although I do recognize this moment as requiring something different, what that something is I do not know; or perhaps I do, but the thing is too big, too complicated, too deep, too breathtaking to think about much less reveal all at once.

Whenever I find myself in this place where my head cannot find the words that match the heart, I sit myself down and begin with acknowledging what I feel, then try to think about why I feel that way, and what visions come into my mind's eye. That's when I saw them. The ghostly Black bodies hanging, dangling from the branches of quintessentially Southern magnolia trees trying now to speak through the ghostly Black bodies lying in the streets of Ferguson, New York, Dayton, San Francisco, Detroit, Chicago, North Charleston, and Cleveland, to name just a few haunted places. And they are begging for something, something different, something powerful, something more meaningful to be done. But what and how are, as always, the pressing questions that send me tumbling back into reflection and re-memory, struggling to make connections between haunting revelations?

## **Revelation I: To Die a Million Deaths**

I am near tears again just thinking about the inevitable. Soon my husband and I will have to sit down with my ten-year-old son to explain yet another tragic and unnecessary murder of a Black boy/man at the hands of the police or someone pretending to be the police. This, of course, is not a new conversation in our household, but it's always a painful one. A couple of summers ago, we followed the details of Trayvon Martin's murder, and this summer, we've spent the last week or so processing the details of Michael Brown's murder and the unrest that has followed. And today, I catch another story on the news: twenty-two-year-old John Crawford was shot and killed by the

police for holding a BB gun and a cell phone in Walmart. I am outraged and heartbroken all over again. *Emmett Till*.

My son, Chas, pretends not to be listening to the sordid details, commentary, and unrest blaring from the TV, but I know better. He watches for a few minutes and then quietly walks away. *Emmett Till*. In a few days or weeks even, he will catch us off guard with a question or an unexpected but simple comment to his younger sister like “Sometimes, Amina, the police do bad things.” That is his *modus operandi*, and in that way, he is certainly my child. Studying his reactions reminds me of my own and sets me upon remembering the first time I learned of the senseless murder of a Black boy. *Emmett Till*.

I first met Emmett Till in the summer of 1985. He wore a clean fedora, a skinny tie with a vertical stripe, and a handsome smile. As he stared at me from the black and white photo on the television screen, I listened to the details of his murder with tears at the corners of my eyes and rage burning in my chest. Several minutes into watching the special on Emmett’s murder, I remembered I had heard this story, years before. It was 1977, I believe, and I was about ten years old, and I had been listening in on some grown folks’ conversation. They were talking about the boy who was lynched for whistling at a White woman down in Mississippi many years ago. *Slavery*. At the time, I had only recently learned about lynching, because my parents allowed my sister and me to watch Alex Haley’s *Roots*. I remember being surprised and horrified at the idea that people could still be lynched long after slavery days. But it was not something about which I wanted to talk about or dwell on too long. I slipped out of the room as quietly as I had come in.

It would be many years and many more murders before I realized that Emmett Till was not lynched in the sense that I had imagined. Although he was not hanged from a tree or castrated, the still sketchy details suggest that he was indeed tortured, mutilated, and humiliated to death by two White men who had deluded themselves into believing they were protecting the honor of a White woman. *Myth of the Black rapist*. This realization compelled me to recount the many times I had heard folks use the word *lynching* and to ponder the details that made a murder a lynching. In African-American speak, lynching has become a metaphor for senseless and violent murder of Black people—Black men in particular—at the hands of White men, seeking to terrorize and control. Most unfortunately, they are also murders where justice is rarely served. In fact, they are murders where justice cannot be served precisely because it is always in a sense a double murder—physical and spiritual. Unlike physical death, however, spiritual death is not necessarily finite. Rather, it is an intrusion into and slow erosion of the psyche. It’s like dying a million deaths. A point emphasized in Patricia Williams’ (1991) discussion of spirit murder. “One of the reasons,” she explains,

I fear what I call spirit murder—disregard for others whose lives qualitatively depend on our regard—is that it produces a system of formalized



distortions of thought. It produces social structures centered on fear and hate, a tumorous outlet for feelings elsewhere unexpressed

(p. 73)

and which ultimately render what Kelly Oliver (2004) calls “double alienation.”

I try to unwind the knot in my stomach creeping slowly into my throat. This conversation will be different from the one before it. When we talked with Chas about Trayvon Martin, it was the first time—and the first time always leaves a little room to register the tragedy as just one unfortunate event. But now with a second and third and a fourth and a fifth (at least one a week for the last several weeks) brought to light, there is less and less room for such an assumption. Certainly he will note the emergent pattern. It will be his first step into the twisted but necessary rite of passage that young Black boys must navigate as they learn to register the disregard and criminalization of Black male bodies, and then try to process such realities with little or no understanding of the histories in which and because of which their lived curriculum has become, in part, a reoccurring racial injury.

## Revelation II: Dear Bill

I just wanted to reach over the miles and over the many years that have settled between us, to say thank you for the countless ways you have influenced my work. Sometimes it was with a simple, yet profound statement that answered an unasked question or set me in an utterly new direction. Sometimes it was a word of encouragement or just a reminder that my voice was important. Most of all I appreciate your work, particularly those ideas that have mapped the contours of my own work—curriculum as complicated conversation, working from within, *currere*, the significance of place, and curriculum as racial, gendered, and autobiographical text. In recent days, however, the work that has been demanding another and another and another look is *The Gender of Racial Politics and Violence in America*.

I remember when you asked me to read the manuscript before you sent the final draft to the publisher. I said yes, of course, and eagerly awaited my copy. It arrived a week or so later by snail mail. I pulled two or three large manila envelopes bursting at their seams from my box. I read a chapter here and there over the next months. It was painful, intriguing, and intense. And when I turned the last page, I simply had no words to describe in that moment all of the things scurrying through my head—shouting and crying and contemplating. A silence fell upon me. The silence, however, was not the kind brought on by shock or disagreement, but rather some time for deep contemplation, some time to find words, some time to convince the unruly ones to settle down and reflect.

The idea that racism is an affair between men has drifted in and out of my teaching, and in and out of my conversations with colleagues, friends,

and family. But in this last year, as I have tried along with so many others to process the unjust killings of young Black men at the hands of White men, I find myself contemplating and wrestling with this idea at a new level of intensity. I often tell my students that sometimes one can read a book and feel as though he or she has a good understanding of it, only to read it many years later and realize he or she had perhaps only half way understood it. Sometimes it is difficult to truly grasp the significance of something you have read, if you cannot call up the personal experiences that open you to the fullest understanding. Upon my first reading, I was caught between the lynching of long ago and the prison rape, which I had the privilege not to think about at all. I could see the connection between the racist past and the racist present. I could see the White man's rapacious desire and hate for the Black man. I could follow the explanation of prison rape as the Black man's revenge. I could gather how White and Black masculinities in the United States have emerged as co-definitive and destructive. I could even see how women have been players, pawns, and resisters in this sordid homoerotic affair between men. But what occurs to me now, reading it more than ten years later and at a moment when ghosts are making themselves known, is not necessarily the details of the picture it paints, but the deep structure of a haunting.

How and when, I wonder, might I explain all of this to my child? Perhaps I do so when the little peach fuzz around his lip is in full bloom, or before he goes off to college, or perhaps I just wait until he asks, if he asks. Will that be too late? What difference will telling him make anyway?

### **Revelation III: The Gathering of Ghosts**

I have a decent commute to and from work each day. Most of the time I arrive home with no immediate memory of how I got there—and safely at that—because I am so busy tending to the many voices clamoring in my head about what I must do, what I can't do, what I should do. Autopilot kicks in and we—my cacophony of voices and I—are home in no time. However, I decided several months ago that it might be safer and more productive for me to listen to books on the way home rather than be distracted by the voices.

I came across Bernice McFadden's (2012) *Gathering of Waters* and was hooked from the first few words, which are interestingly enough spoken by, of all things, the little town of Money, Mississippi. Yes, that's right: The town itself tells the story that begins a few generations before young Emmitt Till's body was dragged from the water; it winds through a series of events over many years and ends on a note of redemption, many years after the lynching. The book was filled with Toni Morrison-esque ghosts, spirits, and hauntings and the people whose lives were complicated by such things.

*Gathering of Waters* opens with the town of Money, Mississippi, introducing itself by explaining that the Black people who have so long lived in its

midst believe in animism, or the fact that spirits continue to live by taking up residence in other people or other things. McFadden uses this explanation to set up the introduction of the first character of the book—Esther, a not-so-dead spirit of a beautiful but crass and nasty “hoer” who lived a hard life and died a hard death and then takes up residence in Doll, a little six-year-old girl, now possessed by the promiscuous spirit of this “dirty hoer,” a name Esther apparently earned from the town folk. What struck me, however, was how the narrating town of Money is itself not only the place where waters gather, but where ghosts gather, where ghosts grant Money the power to be, to acquire meaning, to speak, to live on. It’s the accumulation of meddling ghosts that ultimately makes a sense of place significant, for a “place is place only if accompanied by a history” (Kincheloe & Pinar, 1991). Thus McFadden, by narrating the story through Money, is already setting us up to understand the thick, messy, unrelenting psycho-historical drama—as an intermingled set of happenings that map the hate-desire of the White men who lynched Emmitt Till, the criminalization of Till as a young Black body, the lingering ghosts not just of Till, but of all the trauma leading to and continuing to surround the drama and the people trying to live in its wake, Black and White trapped in racial melancholia—living their lives as a reoccurring racial injury.

Listening to this book over the course of a couple of weeks, set off all kinds of Bill bells for me, a string of thoughts about race–sex dynamics, about repression and alienation, about place, about the power of literature in curriculum studies. I could go on. Before the last words of the last chapter and as I am making my last turn on my forty-five-minute commute, I have an idea. Maybe I should assign this book to my Race, Ethnicity, and Education class and then ask them to diagram a chapter using selections from *The Gender of Racial Politics and Violence in America*. I know it seems like an odd idea, but there is so much potential for new ways of seeing when we juxtapose theory, history, and literature and ponder their reciprocal relations, where each gives new meaning to the other. Although we certainly tend toward the theoretical and maybe the historical in graduate classrooms, the beautiful thing about literature is that it does, as Kelly Oliver (2004) argues, what theory, for the most part, cannot. Literature embodies the affective and reflects the “contradictions and complications between subject position and subjectivity, between the social and the psyche, between oppression and desire” (p. 78). Yes, perhaps this can help us to see, to acknowledge, to talk in a different way about what’s going on, about the lingering ghosts, about the mattering of Black lives, about the never-ending drama that is race–sex. Maybe this will point us in the direction of the “something else” that, according to Avery Gordon (2008), such haunting compels.

### **Revelation IV: Another Kind of Gendered Violence**

Today I was thinking about Rachel Jeantal, the young lady who was on the phone with Trayvon Martin minutes before he lay dead at George’s feet.

I was not just thinking about the spectacle they tried to make of her, but I was really thinking about how witnessing—in a way—the death of her friend has taken up residence in her body. And what about John Crawford's girlfriend? He was on the phone with her standing in the pet food aisle at Walmart when the police rushed in and shot him down dead. How has that taken up residence in her body? What about the mothers of these sons? I also started to think about Esther the whore in McFadden's book—what's her backstory? What trauma took up residence in her body and manifested in her tortured and torturing spirit? That's some of the work waiting to be done. How does she figure centrally in this sordid affair between men? How might thoughtful consideration of her pain play a key role on the road to redemption?

### **Concluding Thoughts for Now**

My work has always been driven by a deep angst over the not mattering of Black lives, by the deep sense of alienation that seems to define every aspect of living Black in a world that nibbles away at your soul with ideas, images, and implicit and explicit practices that constantly work to suffocate your humanity while trying to convince you that none of it is real, none of it is actually happening. I could not imagine that there would have ever been a place for me to work with and through this angst and alienation within a curriculum studies field without Bill Pinar's work, devoid of his propensity to point us toward the deep structure of hauntings and to value the importance of doing work through and not in spite of the self. I can say without pause that there are not too many ideas that Bill's work has put in me, but a host of them that his work has brought out of me, as I have spent the last almost twenty years in conversation with them. Quite frankly, I do not believe in heroes or great thinkers; I do not concern myself with legacies, absolute origins, protégés, or groupies. In my book, there are only two things really that make a wo/man and her or his work worth honoring. One is that her or his work engages us in timeless conversations about those things that continue to haunt us; the other is that her or his work inspires others, leaves room for others to stand up and speak their own truths toward justice for all. I am simply grateful to have experienced both things, sometimes at a cost, in my relationship with Bill and his work.

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### 3 Of That Visionary Gleam

#### On “Sanity, Madness and the School”

*Alan A. Block*

If we allow that human life can be governed by reason, the possibility of life is annihilated.

Leo Tolstoy

I had spent almost thirty-five years in school as student and teacher when first I read William Pinar’s “Sanity, Madness and the School” in the classic text *Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists* (1975). In that essay (part of his doctoral dissertation), Pinar argued that in the process known as schooling, which must not be necessarily identified with the process of education, “socialization is roughly equivalent in going mad” (p. 359). Pinar’s work joined with the various and elegant voices expressing the post World War II *zeitgeist*: Herbert Marcuse’s *One-Dimensional Man*, David Reisman’s *The Lonely Crowd*, William Whyte’s *The Organization Man*, and C. Wright Mills’ *The Power Elite*. Each spoke in its way of the deadening and flattening nature of contemporary society, of the phenomenon of enforced mass socialization that demanded conformity to social norms, of the control of basic urges and psychological processes, and a denial, therefore, of the sense of authentic development of the self apart from that prescribed by society.

Pinar argued that as sanity was the means by which we attain to the social, then it ought to be the function of school to make us ready for society: to make us sane. Indeed, Horace Mann (1957, p. 80) had earlier declared that the schoolroom is the immature, infant state of society’s interests. But, Pinar (1975) wrote, this sanity to which we were introduced was akin to a sense of madness. “This investigation,” he wrote, “is an exploration of this charge that socialization is roughly equivalent to going mad; specifically it explores how the schooling experience contributes to this psychic deterioration” (p. 360). Pinar’s was a serious indictment of the schools; even the psychiatrists themselves at the time questioned the nature of their normalizing work. Adam Phillips (2005) writes: “For the antipsychiatrists at their most extreme, sanity meant complicity with everything that was most dehumanizing, most deadening about culture” (p. 10). These therapists understood that in an insane world, to be sane—to act with reasonableness, even-temperedness, and a

concern for the demands of others—led us to estrange each of us from a concern for the self and was a choice to be insane. To feel normalized was not to be normal! Schooling, Pinar argued credibly, was complicitous in this process and was responsible for producing a generation of the mad! What *was* a teacher to do?

What did it mean to be mad? Pinar suggested, rightly so I think, that to attain to a sanity that is socially acceptable is to struggle to become the self that society expects one to be; to adopt behaviors that essentially render the Winnicottian true self hidden and relatively powerless. Madness, then, was on the one hand a socially mandated form of self-alienation, even a self-denial: to refuse this assimilative process that the school promoted was to risk being labeled mad by the social order. But, on the other hand, madness existed in the decision to refuse that false self that society, in the form of school, compelled us to assume and to assert instead a true self. In this instance, the individual would engage in behaviors that shared in the commonly held social definitions of madness. What *was* a teacher to do?

By the time I had read Pinar's essay I had spent my entire life in school; I became deeply troubled. I had always loved school and had chosen to spend my adult life in it. Indeed, to this day, I still love the classroom. Was I mad? I had spent my entire adult life as a teacher. Was I making mad others? Some of my colleagues had said, like Hamlet, "No more of it, it hath made me mad!" and had left the field entirely. Some like Hamlet bemoaned, "Let me not think on't," and continued on with their normalizing work. I to myself said, "This might be scanned." For years I had stood before students who nodded their heads complacently at me having listened to not a word I had said. Which of us was insane? Am I mad or am I sane? Until I had studied Pinar's essay, I don't think I had ever before evaluated the school using the categories of sanity and madness. I can't even say at the time I had ever thought of myself as either sane or insane: I was normal, I considered, and I was going to school! Of course, the sane maintain their sanity by working hard not to be insane, and schooling has been well-organized to prevent this discovery. Perhaps it is that the schools are designed to educate us in such a manner that we would enter the world without recognizing its or our insanity. In the schools, we were meant to learn to be just like them. In Pinar's terms, the schools demanded that we had to be made insane. Bill taught high school English in the district adjacent to the one in which I taught high school English: "Sanity, Madness and the School" led me to wonder whether Pinar and I were both mad, and more, were we now making others mad as well. If we thought we were sane, were we really mad? If we were mad, then how could we know, much less teach, the sane?

From at least the development of the Common School by Horace Mann and his like-minded colleagues in the nineteenth century and up until the present day, the dominant function of schooling has been to prepare students to enter society as socialized and productive members. School, Mann would argue in his 12th Annual Report, can shape the malleable population it

serves. Of course, Mann (1957) had grander hopes for the Common School than do the contemporary critics of the public schools: Mann thought that the schools would “protect society against intemperance, avarice, war, slavery, bigotry, woes of want and the wickedness of waste” (p. 80), despite sufficient evidence of the ubiquity of injustice, bigotry, slavery, and war in the United States of Mann’s time. His was a mad hope! Today we imperiously expect the schools to protect the economic global dominance of the United States (despite the ubiquity of injustice, bigotry, slavery, woes of want, and war), and we are apt to blame the schools for every suspicion of the decline of United States’ power in world affairs. Since at least the condemnations of Admiral Hyman Rickover in the 1950s, the schools have borne the responsibility for the nation’s military and economic decline, neither of which charge possesses much credibility! The accusation, of course, stems from insanity: as if the success of the Russian space program could be attributed to the deficiencies in the math and science programs in the high schools of the United States, or that the economic ascendancy of China in the global economy could be connected to an ineffectiveness of our elementary school teachers!

Today, we measure educational success by the pulse of the American economy and the rise and fall of standardized test scores. It is a measure of madness. Though “Desire” represents “the non-negotiable law of our being” (Eagleton, 2009, p. 184), to know our Desire represents not insight but appetite. Adam Phillips (2005) notes that an economy such as ours, based as it is in money, allows people to imagine precisely what they desire: Desire is what can be measured. “The money . . . not only [makes] us think we can quantify things that may not be suited to quantification . . . , but it also lures us into a desire for quantification because of its apparent benefits. Numbers are less than ambiguous than words; and a measurement is more obviously commercial” (p. 166). Our religious obsession with quantification leads us to measure everything down to the last penny, and when money cannot be used as a measure then another means of measurement is to be found. Hence, the rise of high-stakes testing in the past fifty years. The mind, Phillips says, becomes defined as something that measures and can be measured! We are mad!

In his essay, Pinar (1975) had suggested that the school, designed to make us socially acceptable and serviceable—in effect, sane—had instead made us mad. Defining schooling in terms of the Freirean conceptualizations of the “banking” or “digestive” process, Pinar explored how the socialization known as schooling “contributes to this psychic deterioration” (pp. 359–360) by which we measure who may be mad and who insane. In school, one learns and is assessed by the behaviors expected by others, and in school, therefore, one loses the capacity to act from one’s own inner motives. In school we learn not to be ourselves; we are taught to follow the directions of others: to be mad. Pinar alludes here in part to the boredom of school that leads one to tend to daydream, to spend a great deal of one’s time not present, or to be rudely called back from this imaginative flight of an engagement with one’s imagination and suffer the dullness of the classroom routine; schooling stifles



the development of the creative self. In its extreme insistence on common and core standards, schooling denies the development of an individual self by demanding the student be “like” someone else: schooling denies the self the possibility of autonomy. The emphasis on grades and grading leads to a breakdown in self-confidence and denies what Pinar (1975) calls affiliative needs, “a feeling of association as strong as familial connections once were” (p. 369). The physical discomfort of schools—those uncomfortable plastic chairs and desks at which children sit for hours and years—leads children to ignore their bodily comforts; in those desks in which they restlessly squirm, they follow the wishes of others and ignore their own desires.

Schooling substitutes for the Self’s power (Desire) the authority of the other. Winnicott (1990) refers to this phenomenon as the development of the “false self.” He writes,

In one way I am simply saying that each person has a polite or socialized self, and also a personal private self that is not available except in intimacy . . . *in illness* the split is a matter of a schism in the mind that can go to any depth; at its deepest it is labelled schizophrenia.

(p. 66, italics added for emphasis)

Schooling produces these polite and socialized selves—false selves—and the chasm between these selves results in the schism that represents mental and physical illness. Pinar (1975) writes, “The cumulative effect of the schooling experience is devastating. We graduate, credentialized but crazed, erudite but fragmented shells of the human possibility” (p. 381). Our students are mad; I think that perhaps the repressed anger of our students are marks not of their madness but of their sanity.

I think that it has been the effort of Pinar’s work to reconceptualize curriculum so as to combat the destructive effects of school on the individual and hence on society. Pinar (1976) transformed the noun, *curriculum*—the content—into the verb *currere*—the process—and described it as “the self-conscious conceptualization of the temporal . . . the viewing of what is conceptualized through time” (p. 51). By such method, Pinar argued, the self through study situates itself in time and space through the construction of the autobiographical narrative. Starting from the Deweyan self in the present engaged non-reflectively in experience, *currere* offers a method by which knowledge is developed and contextualized in the study of the self’s engagement in the ever-widening concentric circles that comprise our lives: self, family, community, nation, world, and universe. Pinar (1976) writes: “The method of *currere* reconceptualized curriculum from the course objectives to complicated conversations with oneself (as a “private” intellectual), an ongoing project of self-understanding in which one becomes mobilized for engaged pedagogical action—as a private-and-public intellectual—with others in the social reconstruction of the public sphere” (p. 37). As Thoreau will somewhere say, wherever he stands, he is the center of the world and the world ripples out from his perspective. *Currere* suggests that the richer that perspective can be

known, the richer becomes the self and its possibilities. To be sane, Adam Phillips (2005) argues, might be a

different kind of prosperity, a realistic hope rather than a merely bland or (austerely) grand alternative to madness. Sanity is an opportunity . . . to include in our accounts of the Good Life for ourselves both unpredictable effects on us of our histories—both the personal and the cultural—and the urgencies and vulnerabilities of our biological destinies.

(p. xxi)

*Currere* offers us a path to a deeper sanity that is not unlike insanity.

If schools ought to be organized to enable the development of the individual, then I might wonder what it is that is meant to develop into sanity but that schools inhibit so as to yield madness. In development, I wonder, what is to be gained and what is lost? “Sanity Madness and the School” suggests that it is our sanity—our sense of a true Self—that is lost. I want to suggest an additional perspective: in the development that schooling provides it is our insanity that we lose, but that the school and *currere* might restore us to this creative madness. What do I mean by this?

In his essay “Primitive Emotional Development,” D. W. Winnicott (1945) postulates that “There are three processes which seem to me to start very early: (1) integration, (2) personalization and (3), following these, the appreciation of time and space and other properties of reality, in short, realization” (p. 139). The development of these processes in a good-enough environment results in a relatively stable, functioning self. By integration, Winnicott refers to the ability of the developing child to locate the sense of self in the body. “To be known,” he writes, “is to feel integrated at least in the person who knows one” (p. 140). But in early development, confidence in the good-enough parent to “gather [the] bits and pieces together” permits the child to also experience unintegration and still remain confident that the discrete pieces will be held and can come together again! Dissociation, or depersonalization, a related process, seems to refer to the sense not that the pieces of self are separate, but that they are disconnected. The child in the tub enjoying the sensuous caressing of warm water and skin stimulations is the same child screaming for immediate satisfaction. Or the child awake does not know that she is the same as the child asleep, or that somehow the person is not the same in one place as she might be in another. In our contemporary vocabulary, when we experience unintegration or dissociation, we say we are “not together.” We are troubled. Our sanity depends on our ability to become integrated.

Winnicott suggests that personalization is the awareness of one’s sense of living in the body. An individual experiencing depersonalization feels that one’s self is not actually in the body. Depersonalization, Winnicott (1945) argues, is the defense mechanism to by-pass “all the anxieties associated with bodily functions: incorporation, digestion, retention and expulsion and the affiliated feelings attendant on these functions” (p. 139). Activities associated

with depersonalization in children might include the invention of imaginary companions: the creative exercise of fantasy, projection, and even displacement. Winnicott argues that should the child's environment facilitate the development of these primary processes, integration, and personalization, then the child will come to appreciate "time and space and other properties of reality—in short, realization" (p. 139). The development of the early emotional development offers clues to the future psychological state of the individual. Integration, personalization, and realization are the primary processes by which one achieves and maintains sanity.

Winnicott theorizes that these basic fundamental processes begin even within the first twenty-four hours of an infant's life and that they continue to develop within an environment that is "good enough." But if sanity is the effort not to be insane, that is, if to be sane is to remain integrated, personalized, and realized, then the sane individual becomes incapable of asking just those questions that those whom we label insane enact: "Sanity," Phillips (2005) says, "means finding ways of not knowing about all the things that might drive you insane were you to know them" (p. 123). Sanity means not wondering whether experiences of dissociation and unintegration have any use or value. And Winnicott (1945) cautions: "It is sometimes assumed that in health the individual is always integrated, as well as living in his own body, able to feel that the world is real" (p. 140). But, Winnicott (1945) continues:

There is . . . much sanity that has a symptomatic quality, being charged with fear or denial of madness, fear or denial of the innate capacity of every human being to become unintegrated, depersonalized, and to feel that the world is unreal.

(p. 140)

That is, though this development of primitive processes continues unabated in a maturing individual, too much of this sanity, however, might make us mad. Perhaps it is sane to want to protect oneself from others: to be insane. Perhaps it is sane not to remain present or to feel whole. Perhaps there are some valuable uses to unintegration or dissociation. Perhaps it is sane to act on desire even though what is desired might be unattainable. Perhaps it is sane for adults (and teachers) not to invent our children but to just let them grow! Today, we close off the experiences natural to the child in our movement into a sanity in which the school is complicit. Winnicott (1945) warns: "We are poor indeed if we are only sane" (p. 140). Phillips (2005) elaborates,

Thus, not being able to be mad, not being able to have recourse to mad solutions would itself be a disability. Sanity in its narrower definitions deprives us of some necessary tools. It allows us neither our full range of emotional reactions to situations—whether terror, bewilderment, ecstasy—nor our most effective forms of self-protection against them.

(p. 141)

Sanity compresses us to our one-dimensionality. Phillips (2005) writes: "For Winnicott, the question was not, what can we do to enable children to be sane, but what can we do, if anything, to enable adults to sustain the sane madness of their young minds" (p. 69). I advocate that this might be one function of the school!

Perhaps the experience of school might creatively disrupt this inexorable movement toward sanity and therefore create a richness where poverty now exists. In his "Intimations Ode," Wordsworth speaks to the loss that occurs when the world becomes too much with us late and soon. The poet asks, "Whither has fled that visionary gleam?" Of what that visionary gleam might consist has been long contested, but Lionel Trilling (1950/2008) argues that the visionary gleam represents a way of seeing and knowing almost wholly gone from adults now grown too sane. It is a vision peculiar to the child, for whom the intensity of emotions and feelings, of an acceptance of states of unintegration, of dissociation and even fantasy, are available—and normal. Wordsworth says that this sanity that denies the madder parts of the self available to the child results from a world that has become too much with us late and soon. The child in the good-enough environment need not address the world from the state of accepted sanity. But in the "Ode," Wordsworth offers the hope that "in thought" we adults might recover the sense of the madness the child experiences:

We will in thought join your throng,  
Ye that pipe and ye that play  
Ye that through your hearts to-day  
Feel the gladness of the May!  
(11.171–174)

It is *in thought* that this visionary gleam can be recalled: Thus,  
What though the radiance which was once so bright  
Be now for ever taken from my sight,  
Though nothing can bring back that hour  
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower  
We will grieve not, rather find  
Strength in what remains behind . . .  
In the soothing thoughts that spring  
Out of human suffering;  
In the faith that looks through death,  
In years that bring the philosophic mind.  
(11.175–185)

I think that it is in the classrooms that we might learn *in thought* how to recollect that visionary gleam and recover the madness that the child may enjoy. The child experiences the world with the intensity and emotional feelings that the work of sanity represses in the adult. The child is legitimately insane. Winnicott (1945) argues that "Through artistic expression we can hope to keep in touch with our primitive selves whence the most

intense feelings and even fearfully acute sensations derive” (p. 140). We are, indeed poor if we are only sane. It is not that Winnicott asserts that children are mad, but that what adults define as mad is normal for the child, and that our definition of sanity protects us from these feelings. And Wordsworth glories in the capacity of joy that *thought* offers him despite the sane, even adult awareness of inevitable loss and mortality.

The Clouds that gather round the setting sun  
Do take a sober colouring from an eye  
That hath kept watch o’er man’s mortality;  
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,  
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,  
To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

Pinar’s *currere* offers the possibiity that in thought we might find some strength in the years that bring the philosohic mind. The schools might inhibit the growth of an unhealthy sanity.

Herman Melville (1962) offers another perspective on the insanities available to the classroom. When Ishmael finds himself

growing grim about the mouth; whenever it is a damp, drizzly November in my soul; whenever I find myself involuntarily pausing before coffin warehouses, and bringing up the rear of every funeral I meet; and especially whenever my hypos get such an upper hand of me, that it requires a strong moral principle to prevent me from deliberately stepping into the street, and methodically knocking people’s hats off—then, I account it high time to get to sea as soon as I can.

(p. 1)

It is, of course, the sane classroom from which Ishmael desires to escape, and it is into the classroom of the sea that he wishes to go. Only there may Ishmael experience transcendence: to admit into his perspective an experience of insanity. Ishmael says,

Know ye, now, Bulkington? Glimpses do ye seem to see of that mortally intolerable truth; that all deep, earnest thinking is but the intrepid effort of the soul to keep the open independence of the sea; while the wildest winds of heaven and earth conspire to cast her on the treacherous, slavish shore.

(Melville, 1962, p. 105)

The truly sane (the insane) acknowledge conflict as their stimulus; they abandon the hope for harmony and peace. These difficult experiences are

to be found only aboard ship and out at sea on a voyage of discovery. For Ishmael, the danger rests on the Lee Shore, the daily classroom, upon which the exercise of creativity, of adventure, and the possibilities of self out of which Ishmael is born will crash and be destroyed. Ishmael again:

But as in landlessness alone resides the highest truth, shoreless, indefinite as God—so, better is it to perish in that howling infinite, than be ingloriously dashed upon the lee, even if that were safety! For worm-like, then, oh! who would craven crawl to land! Terrors of the terrible! is all this agony so vain? Take heart, take heart.

(Melville, 1962, p. 105)

The school eschews the madness of adventure, of the possibility of transcendence, and of independence. But, perhaps, our classrooms might be considered Pequods making effort to keep from crashing on the Lee Shore.

*Currere* offers us a method *in thought* to create wholeness, to experience the openness of the sea in search of the white whale, and keep us from crashing upon the Lee Shore. Too much sanity denies us access to self-hood. Insanity, however, puts us in touch with those primitive processes that enrich our experience. The *truly* sane are not afraid of unintegration—rather, they fear integration. The truly sane accept ambiguity, conflict, doubt, and the possibility of transcendence. The truly sane are skeptical of “all the ways we have been educated and seduced and cajoled into believing that our capacity for sacrifice, whether of self and/or others, is one of the best things about us” (Phillips, 2005, p. 195). We are poor indeed, if we are only sane. But perhaps school might lead us to a tolerance, even an acceptance of a healthy and rich insane life.

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## 4 The Homoerotic Turn and *Currere*

*Deborah P. Britzman*

In a keynote to the Bergamo Conference some twenty-five years ago, William Pinar surprised curriculum study with a reading of David Leavitt's (2005) novel, *The Lost Language of Cranes*. With delight I recall Pinar's handling of homoerotic curriculum as a signifier for love's wagers. I imagine that if some in the audience that long ago day were taken aback with the harshness of moral anxiety, others attached to the challenge of interpreting illegible emotional life to welcome the curriculum yet to come. Here I want to ask pressing questions: What are the stakes of the promise that gay literature can become the royal road to knowledge of desire in education? What audacity may open education to the *sotto voce* of love that does speak its name and presents libidinous gay literature as curricular cathexis? Looking back on Pinar's discussion, I imagine one answer: "*Read again, but this time with feeling.*"

The Leavitt novel was originally published in 1986, in the midst of the North American AIDS pandemic that Paula Treichler (1988) has named as a crisis of signification, response, and care. The woeful disregard, the refusal to understand, the denial of psychical reality, and the paranoid fear remain as the manic defense mechanisms used to ward off the body and its dangers. No wonder then that Leavitt's novel drew language into the question of the loss of love, language, and the self. As for the characters, the loss was of imagination. Leavitt's title signaled that the cranes referred not to a large beautiful bird known for its elaborate seductions, but to an ugly digging machine parked in an empty lot in a New York city neighborhood. Those machinating cranes were noisy; they invaded the ground, lifted earth, and set down their piles somewhere else. Homonyms are like that; it takes a while to reach the latent anxiety in order to restore the beauty of symbolization.

So the novel asks the question, What is love and for whom? One of Leavitt's characters, called Phillip, falls madly in love with Eliot, who may not really want a happy ending. Eliot has a roommate called Jerene, who is writing her dissertation. Her topic, one of the many she begins and then abandons, is off course. Leavitt tells us when anyone asks what the dissertation was about, Jerene preferred not to speak: there were so many topics, too many years of false starts, it is all so complicated, and then too, there were friends



who encouraged her not to finish at all. Her most recent attempt unconsciously repeats these as psycho-dynamics with her study of the child's phenomenon of invented language: a condensation of sounds, secret thoughts, displacements, innuendo, and wishes for a world that both understands and does not understand. But it is with the invented language of young girl twins that Jerene will discuss and she tells both Eliot and Phillip: "I've decided to focus this chapter not on the language itself but on the response, which is in a sense more central to my thesis: what it means that a private, invented language must be scarified 'for the good of the child'" (p. 51). Later she said, "The language had to die" (p. 52). The novelist could be depicting what happens to most of us in education: We shed, or forget, or hide, or ignore essential being; words are treated as weapons or secret things; we have been taught to look over our shoulder; and many of us anticipate pitiful responses, caught in the compulsion to repeat the damage. Pinar's stunning gift that Bergamo day invoked the right to a symbolic as the minimum condition for the right to an everyday. And the crane method that supposes all of this noise and flights of movement is *currere*.

For those of us who have lived this homoerotic history, we may re-read Leavitt's novel as a discourse on love's questions and consider our writing as a warning device against the cruelties of repression, the illusions of narcissism, and as a means to work through love's many blows and losses. Both the character of Phillip and his father, an academic who just walked away from his university post and took on the work of a high school guidance counselor, are gay. The son is in the midst of gay pride; the father can hardly stand himself. Phillip's mother, an editor by profession, is in an unhappy marriage. Mother, father, and son cannot speak of their desires. It is a family romance gone wrong and as the novel slowly digs into the grounds of daily life, uprooting its buried disappointments and false starts, the lost language somehow makes its way back. At that long ago keynote at Bergamo, Pinar presented these situations as *currere*, his method and demand for affecting autobiography interested in the destiny of its inside story projected outside to be re-transcribed through the machinations of regression, projection, and imagination. We are still learning to meet this demand, and over the years Pinar has analyzed what holds us back with the open-ended question of what propels us forward.

What is this demand to recognize the otherness that *auto* presses into writing? One would have to be interested in the Eros of self-formation and what the gay Foucault (1988) called, in his third volume on the history of sexuality, "care of the self." Foucault too advises that one write from one's disciplinary regimes and consider the uses of their pleasure. One would have to delight in Roland Barthes's (2011) lectures, "The Preparation of the Novel," where he sets out the only rule with a writing phantasy:

The principle is a general one: the subject is not to be repressed—whatever the risks to the subject. . . . Better the illusions of subjectivity

than the impostures of objectivity. Better the Imaginary of the Subject than its censorship.

(p. 3)

*Currere*, after all, is a turn toward the subject, a dissonant education, akin to what Kristeva (2000) terms “narrative revolts,” whereby the self is instructed by the other’s questions that call upon erotic activities, active and passive positions, chance interactions, accidents, mistakes, and sundry attempts at transformation. Words are dedicated to the spirit of auscultation, free association, and transference to the ties that bind and unbind the life of the psyche.

One has to admit that education and Eros march side-by-side. Education has never been without gayness, or its history of woeful disregard, denial of psychical reality, and the reduction of people into part objects. Most of our gay writers have their beginning in a gay childhood and more than a few were best friends with the school librarian. I’ve written about the relation between literacy and gayness and what I see today as literature provisioning the transference to a worded life (Britzman, 1998). Yet even as I make this claim predicated on the emotional situation of education as containing the capacity to think more about the destiny of libido, I have in my mind a comment given by Edmund White during a 2008 book launch at one of the last-standing gay and lesbian bookstores, Sisters, in Vancouver, British Columbia. White said that the two enemies of gay people are education and psychoanalysis. He grew up during what I think of as the bad times of ego psychology, where psychoanalysts claimed to cure homosexuality that they attributed to a fixation of libido, regression to an earlier pre-oedipal state, penis envy, and dominating mothers. Why any of this made sense can only be attributed to hatred of homosexuality. All that bothered Edmund White, but not so much that he stopped becoming homosexual. In a short memoir titled “Shrinks,” White (2000) began:

In the mid 1950s, when I was fourteen or fifteen, I told my mother I was homosexual: that was the word, back then, homosexual, in its full satanic majesty, cloaked in ether fumes, a combination of evil and sickness. Of course I’d gleaned the word from her. She was a psychologist.

(p. 63)

As for why education is the other enemy, one need only remember its atmosphere: the force of compliance, the loneliness of silence, the chill of coldness, and the cult of hardness tied to national mythologies that animate erotic ties, and at the same time, severe their significance. There were painful responses: the firing of teachers, hatred legislation, bad votes, public hysteria, censorship, and Anita Bryant and Roy Cohen. Yet the stories of homoeroticism in education also enact an invented language: Some of us were having or imagining having sex with our teachers and schoolmates. There love regained its wondrous name. And for a great many years, the research on

sexuality in education had to dedicate itself to clearing a path, defending human rights, and looking more carefully at the aggressions big and small of education. A significant resource for such work should be literature as it has the capacity to return the repressed but this time with feeling. One need only think of Lillian Hellman's 1934 play *The Children's Hour* to take on the import of *currere* and the open secret that Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1990) named in her magnificent study of literature, "the epistemology of the closet" (p. 67).

"For any modern question of sexuality," Sedgwick (1990) wrote, "knowledge/ignorance is more than merely one in a metonymic chain of such binarisms" (p. 73). One can state this with feeling: there can be no signifier without sexuality and phantasy. Around 1989 and, I think, due to those in literature and language departments—recall the mothers of inventions: Teresa de Lauretis, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and Judith Butler, for instance—the idea of queer theory served as the means for the analysis of the subject of language. For many of us, this enigmatic frame contained our justified anger for what has happened in failed education. I was inspired to write the paper, "Is there a queer pedagogy? Or, stop reading straight." That title now reads as schizoid. At the time, that was how I felt: bifurcated, split, and alienated. The reparation, I felt, could only come from reading otherwise. So I posed the question of reading practices along with their inhibitions and leaned on the work of Cindy Patton (1990) whose focus was on the splitting mechanisms of us versus them, Sedgwick (1990) who considered the reparative uses of a universalizing discourse, and Shoshanna Felman's (1987) discussion of pedagogy as embroiled in what Lacan has named as our passion for ignorance. They inspired the reading practice of implication and new subject positions. A demand for a queer pedagogy was also an attempt to grapple with the terms of hetero-normativity, a rather clunky word that signified an invasive phantasy, mistaken yet dangerous. However awkward, the word gave us a foothold into the questions, What is normal and Why do we care? But as a catchword, more often, it became a sort of accusation and in this sense, repeated hostility, persecutory guilt, and splitting mechanisms. It was sort of like turning the tables, though not yet an interpretation in the psychoanalytic sense of calling for free association.

Pinar's (1998) edited collection, *Queer Theory in Education*, reminds us that if queers are hardly strangers to the constitution of pedagogy—that more than shadow play occurred in Plato's cave—at the time of the publication of this volume, and now looking back at it, no unity could be established amidst its authors as to what is really queer about queer theory. I believe the same question circulates in the psychoanalytic field so we must have the audacity to ask again, What is psychoanalytic about psychoanalysis? Can both queer theory and psychoanalysis exceed our well-schooled pedagogical principles and welcome wild analysis and its desire for freely associating with curriculum? Pinar's (1998) reply: "One might then think of identities and sexualities as formed and reformed through *fantasized acts of relationality*" (ital. added, p. 27).

Are we ready for phantasy? This is the direction I have entered with the psychoanalytic idea that education can recommend psychical reality with an affectionate theory of learning capable of containing anxiety and addressing our emotional situation (Britzman forthcoming). For sometime, I have been writing in the psychoanalytic key and have turned to the theory of Melanie Klein, who after all, seems to extend Barthes's measure—"better the illusions of the imaginary"—to the farthest reaches of psychical life. Klein brings us into the intimate chaos of phantasy, thought of as an unconscious constellation of drives, anxieties, and defenses that paradoxically are actually needed for the capacity to elaborate symbolization. For Klein—and her theory was worked out with very young children at play with "toy people"—phantasy is a function of the mind, its contents, its mechanisms, and its means for handling the difference between internal reality and the external world. It begins, however, in frustration of weaning and the loss of the breast that somehow creates movement from the terror of part objects to the apperception of whole people, expressed in the oscillation between the paranoid schizoid and depressive positions. Phantasy, to say the least, is a felt experience of extremity and excess and, step-by-step, leads to the capacity to hold the object in mind without recourse to hostility, denial of psychical reality, and the hardening of the early defenses of omnipotence, envy, and persecutory anxiety. Many years ago I would not have associated the work of *currere* to the working through of the depressive position; but the sequence, something Freud (1968) saw in one of his early technique papers as "remembering, repeating, and working through" and what Klein would see as the freeing of phantasies for imagination and a more capacious sense of reality as interpreted reality, is similar in hopes. But for Klein (1975), one must pass through the object relations: imagos of anxiety, aggression, and defense, and then as worries over destruction of the object.

On the way to Klein, it is worth quoting Freud (1968) on such matters:

We have learnt that the patient repeats instead of remembering, and repeats under the conditions of resistance . . . [H]e repeats everything that has already made its way from the sources of the repressed into his manifest personality. . . . He also repeats all his symptoms in the course of the treatment . . . the compulsion to repeat.

(p. 151)

And Klein would see the repetition compulsion as the hostile denial of the significance of psychical reality. Her contribution was that she took this hostility as only the beginning of transference.

Should we introject the homoerotic object, complications emerge. The conflicts have much to do with the vulnerability of self-love, abandoned when the self is diminished and when love of the other is unacknowledged. David Levitt's novel, perhaps not the great gay novel, though one of many that calls upon the intimacies and failures of learning and response, is unafraid to narrate earlier states of defense such as omnipotence and splitting

and link them to aggressive drives. What would have to be analyzed, then, are the anxieties of influence and introjection rooted in the underlying guilt of a superego that must destroy the good object and in so doing shatter the ego. Klein argued that the force of the superego must become diminished in its commands for the conscience to come into being. But it all stems from the capacity for guilt, needed for reparation and gratitude.

Klein has argued that symbolization is our second chance to love and the greatest defense against diminishing the inner world and, that in trying to sustain the good object, anxiety is justified. She (1937) gives us an emotional sense of the difficulties wrought by fragmentation:

There is anxiety how to put the bits together in the right way and at the right time; how to pick out the good bits and do away with the bad ones; how to bring the object to life when it has been put together; and there is the anxiety of being interfered with in this task by bad objects and by one's own hatred, etc. Anxiety situations of this kind I have found to be at the bottom of not only depression, but of all inhibitions of work.  
(pp. 269–270)

I can only be schematic in my attempt to suggest the fragility of the homoerotic turn. My hunch is that whether we begin with *currere* or psychoanalysis, curriculum study as a view of life now has the difficult task of moving from the depressive anxiety to a creative position, one unafraid of human vulnerability as both the bare element of the human condition and the place from which we write. The proposal would be to recommend the homoerotic turn, just as we must recommend apprehension of psychical reality. And the phantasy demand would go something like this: *Read again, but this time with feeling.*

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## 5 Crossing the Continental Divide

### Pinar, Reconceptualization and Curriculum in Canada<sup>1</sup>

*Terrance R. Carson*

#### Introduction

A reconceptualization of curriculum studies was already well underway when William Pinar's edited volume *Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists* appeared in 1975. By that time, both the theoretical assumptions and practical usefulness of scientific curriculum making, which had previously held sway in the curriculum field for many decades, was being greeted with increasing scepticism. Joseph Schwab's widely read 1970 essay had declared the curriculum field to be effectively "moribund . . . unable, by its present methods and principles to continue its work and contribute significantly to the advancement of education" (1970, p. 287). Schwab went on to propose his own alternative to "an inveterate, unexamined, and mistaken reliance on [technical scientific] theory," in the form of a model of curriculum making as a deliberative practice. Nevertheless, Schwab's observation that the field was effectively "dead" found a receptive audience in curricularists already smarting from having been largely ignored by developers involved in the massive national reforms of the "education decade" of the 1960s.

While many scholars were beginning to question the historical and intellectual foundations of the curriculum field (Huebner, 1975; Kliebard, 1975), Pinar acknowledged they remained in the minority, remarking (several years later) that "most curricularists at work in 1977 [could still] be characterized as traditionalists" (Pinar, 1978, p. 6). Be that as it may, by the late 1970s, reconceptualization was emerging as a significant collective of critical and creative voices within the North American curriculum field. The method of *currere* (1975, p. 396) provided a primary creative direction for reconceptualization. Substituting the Latin verb form *currere* (to run) in the place of the original nominative form *the curriculum* (referring to a race course) opened the field to questions beyond a focus on organizational issues of curriculum design and development, to consider more basic questions of culture, society and the place of education in the running of personal and collective lives. While the project of *currere* has its roots in autobiography, beckoning education to consider the primacy of subjective experience, it now extends and continues to extend understandings of society and subjectivity through a

variety of informing discourses. We may now say that reconceptualized curriculum studies consists of an “extraordinarily complicated conversation” (Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman, 1995, p. 847) that includes history, politics, race, gender, culture, aesthetics, theology, phenomenology and post-structuralism.

## Reconceptualization of Curriculum Studies in Canada

A reconceptualization of curriculum studies was also underway in Canada in the 1970s. Also a minority movement, the Canadian version of reconceptualization shared many of the same intellectual foundations with the American curriculum, but it arose from within a different historical and cultural context. While Canada shares a continent and common border with the United States, these differences in the history, culture and values of the two nations provoke a slightly different interpretation of the legacy of reconceptualization and the current conditions of teaching and education as reflected, for example, in *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (2004/2012). This chapter will make some observations on the significance of reconceptualization of curriculum theory for educators in Canada, while highlighting some important cultural and historical differences between the two countries.

The influential Canadian curriculum scholar, Ted T. Aoki, recommended Pinar’s *Curriculum Theorizing: The Reconceptualists* to his students shortly after it appeared in 1975. Aoki presciently told his students “read this book—this is the future of curriculum studies” (Smith, personal communication). At the time, Aoki and his students had been intrigued by the curriculum possibilities offered in the critical theory of Jurgen Habermas’ *Knowledge and Human Interest* (1972). Aoki’s explorations in continental European philosophy, and influenced in part by the pedagogical theorizing of his student Max van Manen (1977), resulted eventually in the publication of *Curriculum Evaluation in a New Key* (1978). Over the intervening years, since the publication of the reconceptualist collection, Pinar has enjoyed close relationship with Canadian curriculum studies, publishing the work of scholars such as David G. Smith, Jacques Daignault, Jan Jagodzinski, David Jardine, Rebecca Luce-Kapler, Dennis Sumara, Cynthia Chambers, as well as Ted Aoki, in his many edited collections of contemporary curriculum discourses, and in the pages of *JCT: The Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*. One collection of note, *Understanding Curriculum as Phenomenological and Deconstructed Text* (Pinar and Reynolds, 1992) focused especially on the groundbreaking contributions of Canadians in phenomenology, hermeneutics and post-structuralism in curriculum studies.

In August 2005, Pinar became a resident of Canada, after being offered a prestigious Senior Canada Research Chair at the University of British Columbia. The Canada Research Chairs program was launched by the Canadian government in 2000 to sponsor and promote leading-edge research



and innovation in universities, research hospitals and the private sector. Given conventional ideas of what constitutes “leading-edge research and innovation,” it is hardly surprising that the majority of the research chair appointments have been in science, engineering and medicine. Thus, it is an impressive achievement both in terms of Pinar’s own scholarly reputation as well as the status he has brought to the place of curriculum studies in the academy, that a major Canadian research university appointed him to a Tier One Canada Research Chair. To be sure, no scholar has written more forcefully, persuasively and consistently about the rightful place of curriculum studies as a distinctive interdisciplinary field in education. Pinar reiterated his argument for the uniqueness and importance of curriculum studies in the academy in his award-winning 2004 book, *What Is Curriculum Theory?*, where he states that it may be the “only academic discipline within the broad field of education . . . unique in hav[ing] its origin in and ow[ing] its loyalty to the discipline and experience of education” (p. 10).

### ***A Canadian Reading of Curriculum Theory***

My reading of *What Is Curriculum Theory?* is with the sensibilities of a fifth generation Canadian of Anglo-Irish descent, whose grandparents came west from Ontario to settle in the part of the Northwest Territory that was to become the new province of Alberta in 1905. From such a location, Pinar’s analysis of the plight of American educators sounds both foreign and familiar. Familiarity lies in his description of the neoliberal economic and cultural forces at work in the United States. As David G. Smith (2003) points out neoliberalism has “provided the basis for an assault on public services especially in those countries falling under the orbit of Anglo-American influence . . . with the application of business principles to most sectors of the public domain” (p. 37). Many of us in Canada are only too aware of how the discourses of market capitalism are re-forming the landscape of education and the subjectivities of educators, as schools increasingly use business language to describe their activities, in which students and parents become “clients,” while teachers are the “service providers.” One among many examples of this in Canada is the work of the Vancouver-based Fraser Institute, a privately funded conservative think tank, whose commentary on a variety of public issues finds ready access to the media and politicians. Their publications include so-called school report cards that purport “to give parents an annual audit” of schools’ comparative performances in various Canadian provinces.<sup>2</sup>

Pinar (2004) states it should come as “no surprise to any serious student of American curriculum history” (p. 16) that school reform is now dominated by business thinking. Canadian curriculum has traditionally been less activist in its ambitions to shape society through schools. There are both historical and constitutional limitations to such incursions. Constitutionally, education falls under provincial jurisdiction, and provinces have traditionally

been entrusted to protect English and French linguistic and cultural rights (Tompkins, 1985/2008). Although the English-speaking education community in Canada often borrows from American sources for school reform, the scope for radical individualist change is tempered by a more collectivist attitude in Canadian society. As Cynthia Chambers (2003) reminds us, cultural and physical survival have been constant themes in Canadian curriculum history. A basic faith in public institutions to serve the public good in Canada is an enduring aspect of this legacy of concern for survival in Canadian national consciousness. This may help to account for the fact that public education is still relatively well funded in Canada, with the vast majority of children continuing to attend public schools that enjoy a measure of trust and public confidence.

What is most remarkable and strikingly different about American education for a Canadian reader of *What Is Curriculum Theory?* is Pinar's evocation of the "nightmare that is the present" for educators. Here, Pinar mentions but does not dwell excessively on the details of the No Child Left Behind Act, which punishes non-performing schools, nor on how (NCATE) the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education "pressures the education professoriate to comply with the political agenda of the right-wing in America" (p. 31). While many Canadian educators are aware of these intrusive reforms in the United States, such levels of political interference in education both surprise and dismay Canadians who have not encountered this kind of intervention, in spite of the forces of globalization and the economic convergences between our nations.

The main focus of Pinar's book is the deployment of curriculum theory to understand the sources of the "nightmare" and to help educators reclaim their professional voices and intellectual freedom. In tracing these sources, Pinar makes the claim that the "professional subjugation" of American teachers is not new. It dates from the 1950s from "gendered anxieties over the Cold War and racialized anxieties over desegregation that have coded public education as 'feminized' and 'black'" (p. xii).

Pinar wishes to style *What Is Curriculum Theory?* as a "primer for teachers." Instead of offering quick fixes, this book asks that educators join in a longer-term project of *currere* to understand the historical present situation in hopes that this will ultimately lead to self-mobilization and social reconstruction. *Currere* is both an autobiographical and political project, which offers educators help without necessarily giving them advice. Offering help without giving advice is refreshing and important at a time in which teachers are awash in so many forms advice that come in a variety of guises, including ambitious school reform agendas, intrusive self-help programs, teaching guides and outright directives from central offices. There is a fine line—and often there is no line at all—between advice and control. Help without advice is a genuine contribution by Pinar and curriculum theory to American, and in a more indirect way, to Canadian public education.

Through the regressive and analytical moments of *currere*, Pinar traces the political origins of the present professional subjugation of teachers to the way that educators and local curriculum developers had become sidelined during the so-called education decade launched by the Kennedy administration in the early 1960s. The ambitious national curriculum projects, which were meant to reform American education—especially in the mathematics and sciences—to counter the threat of Soviet educational ascendancy, were removed from the control of public educators to be turned over to cognitive psychologists and subject area discipline specialists. Public school educators and those traditionally responsible for curriculum development, who in the view of politicians and academic critics had let educational standards in America slide, would not be trusted to provide the solution.

Pinar goes further, however, arguing that the “nightmare that is the present” for American teachers should not be attributed to a simple lack of trust. He argues that there are much deeper cultural and historical roots of social hatred, that lie deeply embedded in racism and misogyny, that have been displaced and deferred into public education. In the regressive moment of *currere* (an evocation of the past in the present) Pinar provides us with an acute psychoanalytic reading of American history, explaining how the traumas of the Cold War and desegregation of the 1950s and 1960s have been displaced and deferred, and now shape the increasingly conservative American political landscape of the past three decades. This, he argues, is a particular trauma of the South, but American politics itself has “gone South.” Quoting Black and Black (1992, p. 366), Pinar (2004) observes, “one looks at the South and sees America” (p. 93).

*What Is Curriculum Theory?* is structured around the regressive, progressive, analytic and synthetic moments of *currere*. The regressive moment describes how gender and racial politics are played out in the current reforms that increasingly position teachers as “providers of educational services” as opposed to being thought of as educators. The progressive moment (the future in the present) focuses on the effects of computers and television on identities and culture. The analytic moment then opens for readers the complicated conversation of contemporary curriculum discourses. In the synthetic moment of self-mobilization and social reconstruction teachers are enjoined to “enter the arena” (p. xiii) to educate the public and to talk back to politicians and uniformed parents.

Pinar sets out a challenging road for educators to take—especially challenging, because part of accepting help without receiving advice, and undertaking the process of *currere* will also require teachers to begin to take some responsibility for their own subjugation. As Pinar argues (2004), educators must be prepared to “face the teaching profession’s own pervasive and crippling anti-intellectualism as the internalized consequences of decades-long subjugation” in order to begin the process of “renew[ing] a commitment to the intellectual character of our professional labor” (p. 9). Help in the form of re-intellectualizing the teaching profession has been the overall project of curriculum reconceptualization over the past thirty years—a project which has opened up the curriculum field to a wide range of informing discourses.

Making sense of the course of life is a complicated conversation that has enlisted multiple discourses, which include phenomenology, gender studies, post-structuralism, psychoanalytic theory, and critical race theory. Engagement in *currere* creates zones of freedom and possibility for educators.

### Implications for Canadian Curriculum

Renewing the intellectual character of our professional labor as educators is no less important in Canada than it is in the United States. As I have suggested above, Canadian public education has experienced many of the same pressures to conform to business models of accountability. There are political attempts to gain greater control over teaching and teacher education. Both Ontario and British Columbia have formed “colleges of teachers” to oversee the curriculum of education faculties in those two provinces. Through the courts the University of British Columbia has fought attempts by the BC College of Teachers to interfere with the university’s academic freedom to design the teacher curriculum. The fact that Canadian education been spared the level of professional subjugation described by Pinar in *What Is Curriculum Theory?* might be attributed to Canadian history and culture.

With the Canadian economy becoming increasingly integrated with the United States through NAFTA and global capitalism, we might assume that Canadian values would also begin to converge with those of America. Certainly, conservative opinion in Canada approvingly assumes such a trend.<sup>3</sup> But public opinion polling and the character of contemporary political discourse in Canada suggest that the opposite is true: Canadian and American values seem to be diverging. While the political culture of the United States is becoming more conservative, more Southern and more religious, Canada seems to be going in an opposite direction toward a more open, cosmopolitan and secular society (Adams, 2003). Why this should be so possibly originates in the contrasting but related histories of the two nations. As the American political sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset (1990) has pointed out in his comparative study of Canadian and American institutions, *Continental Divide*, the differences between the two countries can be traced to the opposing sides of the American Revolution. Building on Lipset’s observations, Michael Adams (2003) notes:

From distinct roots, Canada and the U.S. have grown up with substantially different characters: group rights, public institutions, and deference to authority have abided north of the border, while individualism, private interests, and mistrust of authority have remained strong to the south . . . [But] in the past quarter-century . . . Canadians have distanced themselves from traditional authority: organized religion, the patriarchal family, and political elites. . . . Meanwhile, a greater proportion of Americans are clinging to old institutions—family, church, state, myriad clubs, voluntary associations, even gangs—as anchors in a chaotic world.

(p. 5)

For Canadian educators, negotiating the diversity of Canadian identities, history and culture and the implications of this diversity for curriculum studies is a different kind of complicated conversation. Cynthia Chambers (2003) takes up the threads of this conversation in a chapter in the *International Handbook of Curriculum Research*, titled “As Canadian as Possible Under the Circumstances: A View of Contemporary Curriculum Discourses in Canada.” Her title “as Canadian as possible” refers to a national joke that pokes fun at the impossibility of defining a uniform national identity. Chambers concludes that as an immigrant country, “traditions and languages [brought to Canada are] infinitely re-created in and with a land and people that seem to refuse easy definition” (p. 246).

## In Conclusion

By way of a conclusion to these reflections on the contributions of William Pinar to curriculum studies in Canada, I wish to take note of the honour that he has given to a preeminent scholar of Canadian curriculum through the collected works of Ted Aoki, co-edited with Rita L. Irwin of the University of British Columbia. Aoki, a Canadian born of Japanese descent, exemplifies traditions of Zen Buddhism re-created in a difficult life of war-time expulsion from the British Columbia coast, finally turning to teaching in southern Alberta. Pinar (2005) refers to Ted Aoki as a “legendary figure in North American curriculum studies” (p. 1). Aoki has had an inestimable influence on many educators not only in North America but internationally. Scattered widely in teachers’ association magazines, conference proceedings, and various occasional papers, there was always the danger that Aoki’s influence would survive only through contemporary auditors. He wrote no books. Rather, Aoki mainly “talked to teachers,” a fact he acknowledges himself when he borrowed from William James to entitle his address celebrating the 50th anniversary of the University of Alberta’s Faculty of Education “Inspiring Curriculum and Pedagogy: Talks to Teachers.”

In his introductory essay to *Curriculum in a New Key: The Collected Works of Ted T. Aoki*, Pinar (2005) points out that for Aoki, conferences and talks to teachers became pedagogical events. This edited collection of the works of Ted Aoki will stand as one of Pinar’s most generous and enduring contributions to the curriculum field in Canada. Aoki’s scholarship, which spans a range of discourses through phenomenology, critical theory, post-structuralism, and beyond, has always remained attentive to the life-world of teaching and teachers. It is very much in tune with the spirit of *currere*. Now, thanks to William Pinar and to Rita Irwin, Aoki’s work will continue to be studied and grow into the future.

## Notes

- 1 This paper is based on my remarks originally prepared for a panel discussion on a retrospective of the work of William Pinar at the annual conference American Association for Teaching and Curriculum, Austin TX, October 7, 2005.

2 See [www.fraserinstitute.ca](http://www.fraserinstitute.ca)

3 See for example, Jeffery Simpson (2000), *Star-Spangled Canadians*, Toronto: Harper Collins.

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## 6 Curriculum as the Place of Study

*Brian Casemore*

Articulating the specificity of situation is prerequisite to working through its legacies.

William Pinar (2011, p. 163)

### Introduction

The question of my location initiates an uncertain search. What constitutes the place I inhabit? I turn to the immediate landscape to name the situation of my existence. In Washington, DC, where I currently live and teach, I walk to Union Station to catch the train. I traverse the puzzle-cut grounds of Stanton Park on Capitol Hill, walking across a community square named for the Civil War-era politician Edwin Stanton and past a bronze equestrian statue of the Revolutionary War general Nathanael Greene. A monumental façade encrypts histories of region and nation. Littleleaf lindens edge the park. Beyond them, maples and oaks line Maryland and Massachusetts avenues. My neighbors follow arboreal paths to schools, offices, libraries, and museums, an endless proliferation of quotidian journeys.

If, as Edward Casey (1993) argues, “place situates time by giving it a local habitation” (p. 21), place houses a most elusive temporality. The past that accumulates and stirs in place is available only through narratives and representations that, in part, circuit around what they cannot admit—what we cannot bear to know. And the past, however painful and enigmatic, requires our engagement if we are to evoke potential futures. I am thus drawn to study place as it is subjectively lived, understanding that subjective experience—explored specifically through the framework of psychoanalysis—reveals ruptures, displacements, and overdeterminations of meaning that mark and therefore enable the exploration of an unconscious past that profoundly shapes the present. The external world calls us—in our subjective, indeed internal, capacities—to reanimate place with our understanding of its lost histories. Through the organizing principle of place, external reality comes into view in its particularity, fostering my engagement with place as a threshold into social history, personal memory, and unconscious process.

My description of the DC landscape reflects movement, a theme that appears in my study of the American South—an autobiographical, literary, and psychoanalytic examination of the region (Casemore, 2008). In that work, I explore characters in Southern literature who have various responses to geographical movement—for whom movement provokes a sense of rootlessness or enlivens a wish for personal renewal and transcendence. The theme of movement emerges as I question my idealizations of home, express my ambivalence toward the South, and consider dynamics of otherness in a region both deeply fractured by racism and often characterized as a monolith.

Yet the theme of movement that now appears in my description of Washington, DC—my new home—seems freighted with an opposing wish about place. In my reference to endless quotidian journeys, I recognize the desire for movement beyond the traumatic fixations of the American South. My study of the South has been deeply interwoven with my effort to understand my home as a particular place. And I understand from psychoanalysis that working through our “origins” is an interminable process (Taubman, 2012, pp. 24, 129). However, my move from Baton Rouge, Louisiana—my hometown—to Washington, DC—a seemingly more progressive and certainly more ambiguous Southern place—provokes a feeling that I might leave the conflicts and uncertainties of my social and familial origins behind. I return to the landscape, and to the memories and histories it evokes, to explore what my sense of harmonious movement might obscure.

I wonder what can be learned from DC’s monumental presence, particularly the statue of Nathanael Greene in Edwin Stanton Park. Edwin Stanton, historians tell us, was Abraham Lincoln’s secretary of war. Aligned with Radical Republicans during the Civil War and Reconstruction, Stanton sought to rout out and punish those who favored the Confederate states. Nathanael Greene, on the other hand, was George Washington’s “most trusted military subordinate,” the commander of the continental army in the Southern colonies during the Revolutionary War. After retiring to the South on land he acquired through “the generosity of the southern states” (Carbone, 2008, p. 219), Greene would argue of slavery that “nothing can be said in its defense” (p. 219). He would, nonetheless, defend his own practice of slavery, explaining that the hundreds of black men and women he would enslave until the end of his life were “as much attached to a plantation as a man is to his family” (pp. 218–219). In its juxtaposition of historical figures, Stanton Park, a community square and monumental place, encodes an uncanny dimension of national identity—the simultaneous embrace and disavowal of the South and its racist practices.

Free associative writing enables my inquiry into the ambivalence of place. In free-floating narrative, I document “objects”—in the psychoanalytic sense—that come into view, “evocative objects” that in their “thing-ness” have “an integrity of their own” but that in their subjective resonance are



“capable of putting the self through a complex inner experience” (Bollas, 2009, p. 80). This writing allows me to study place as an “evocative object world” (pp. 80–94), where I can consider the “unconscious nature of collective life” that is revealed in public spaces, yet experienced in personal and singular ways (Bollas, 2009, pp. 2, 47–77). Place—“the specificity of [my] situation” (Pinar, 2011, p. 163)—becomes legible and available for study in geography, architecture, and social milieu.

The treatment of “place” as simultaneously social and subjective is central to William Pinar’s “character of criticism”—that is, to the “distinctive way of being in the world” his scholarly work expresses (Harpham, 2006, p. 8). Pinar’s (1991) earliest work on place illuminates the importance of social and subjective locatedness in the understanding of curriculum. Throughout later work, he presents the study of curriculum as a fundamentally located act. “Study,” he argues, “is the *site* of education” (my emphasis, Pinar, 2006, p. 112)—a *subjective site* calling for our continual reengagement and reconstruction. “From the point of view of study,” he continues, “self-formation follows from our individual appropriation of what is around us,” from a cultivated “capacity for selection, for focus, for judgment” (p. 112). Pinar thus invites us to consider, to question, and to reanimate our own processes of subjective emplacement. He calls us to specify our situation in a way that juxtaposes and makes available for investigation the personal, more deeply psychical, social, and material elements of place. He calls us, as well, to investigate this process in the work of others—scholars, artists, poets, activists, students, teachers, and engaged, displaced, and silenced world citizens—those whose ongoing work of being in the world uniquely expresses subjective emplacement in conditions of otherness.

### Curriculum Becomes a Place

In his inaugural work on the significance of place in curriculum, Pinar (1991) presents the study of place as a form of social psychoanalytic labor. The purpose is “to recover memory and history in ways that psychologically allow individuals to reenter politically the public sphere in meaningful and committed ways” (pp. 173–174). Working simultaneously with notions of *place* as region, *place* as sphere of experience, and *place* as perceptual and experiential surround, Pinar reveals *place* to be a fluid and shifting phenomenon; and, in this context, he establishes the notion of curriculum as a distinct *place* in human experience. “Curriculum not only represents a ‘place,’” Pinar explains, “it also becomes a ‘place,’” (p. 165). Curriculum becomes a *place of study*—one sufficiently bounded to enable reflection on one’s singular becoming and one sufficiently capacious to enable exploration of obscured histories, social forces, and experiences of otherness. Curriculum, then, emerges as the subjective site of social psychoanalysis. It is the “place” or “ground” that “permits the student to emerge as figure, capable of critical participation in a historical present hitherto denied” (p. 165).

Pinar (1991) develops this theory through the example of the American South, a region whose distinctive history and character substantially illuminate the significance of place in social, subjective, and educational experience. The South is worthy of study, particularly for those with a Southern regional identification, for two reasons. First, as many Southern historians and critics have argued, Southerners have largely forgotten the region's "history of slavery, war, defeat, and relative poverty," severing or otherwise distorting the memory of various historical traumas that profoundly shape life in the South (p. 166). Following the Southern writers W. J. Cash and Lewis Simpson, Pinar argues "Southerners have retreated from the facts of their history to fictions and fantasies" (p. 167). In turn, he explores the effects of these psychological distortions in various "spheres" of experience—key among them, race, class, and gender.

The second reason is that, among Southerners, place is an important "category of social and personal experience," with a strong sense of place communicating an historical connection to the land and, if unconsciously, the race relations forged in the crucible of plantation slavery (Pinar, 1991, p. 167). Place, in this frame of analysis, becomes palpable as a social and subjective sphere of experience amplified through a psychological closure on history—that is, through the way "the specific history of this region echoes [unconsciously] in the lives of its present inhabitants" (p. 166). As Pinar specifies the devastating effects of the South's historical denial in economic, cultural, and educational domains, his account of Southerners' "intensified relation to place" suggests the subjective ground for working through the past (p. 167).

Pinar's (2004, 2007, 2010) more recent characterizations of the South demonstrate the protean nature of place as a phenomenon and concept. In one return to the South, for example, Pinar (2004) describes the region in terms of its national significance, exploring its influence in the conventional political sphere and its role in national and regional myths and fantasies. This portrayal of the South appears in *What Is Curriculum Theory?*—a text that introduces "prospective and practicing teachers" in the United States to the field of curriculum theory. In this context, Pinar gives the South prominence of place, working a tension between region and nation somewhat muted in his earlier work. To orient us to this historical and curricular labor, Pinar (2004) employs the autobiographical method *currere*—"a method," he emphasizes, "focused on self-understanding"—to structure an exploration of neglected histories and possible futures that might enable us to understand our shared present moment (p. 5).

In the regressive phase of *currere*, he reintroduces and deepens his 1991 examination of the South, citing the Southern political scientists Earl and Merle Black to argue that, despite its distinctiveness as a "place," the "problems" of the American South "plague the nation as a whole" (Pinar, 2004, p. 94). The South presses on the entire nation, we learn, through its "political ascendancy in presidential politics," by serving as a cultural bedrock for the

(race and gender) politics of conservatism in America, and by eliciting psychological collusion on the part of progressive (white) Northerners, whose capacity for shaming the South largely exceeds their willingness to interrogate their own racist histories (pp. 98, 233–239).

In this particular treatment of the significance of the South, Pinar (2004) charts “place” from region to nation, from political sphere to psychical landscape, documenting, for example, “the southern abjection of the civic” and the way, despite the end of slavery and the successes of the civil rights movement, both Southern and Northern “whites struggle to keep [the black body] in its place, a place in the white imaginary” (p. 98). On this last point, Pinar makes a direct link to his study *The Gender of Racial Politics and Violence in America* (2001), a wide-ranging and deeply unsettling study of lynching, prison rape, and the crisis of masculinity. In the context of his work on the South, *The Gender of Racial Politics and Violence in America* represents the necessity and the risk of regression in social psychoanalytic labor—where terrors, traumas, and unforeseen associations are revealed in the fundamental contours of self and world.

Throughout his scholarship, Pinar cultivates a subjective place—one in particular that supports engagement in study generally and social psychoanalysis specifically. A vocabulary of locatedness invites us to consider our emplacement in diverse sites, discourses, and contexts. In *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (2004) we see place shift across region, nation, psychical landscape, and textual topoi—revealing the way regional histories and myths shape the psyche of the nation, the way the white mind encrypts the black body, the way autobiography (particularly through the example of African-American writers) can excavate and hold conditions of otherness that resonate in subject and social fields, and the way the productions of one’s intellectual life—bounded and porous; located in history, biography, and geography; interpenetrating and open to the intellectual work of others—emerge from and contribute to an ongoing process of subjective emplacement.

## The Dismantling of Things

The work of poet Yusef Komunyakaa represents the layered emplacement of subjectivity in history, geography, culture, physical space, and psychic interiority. He tells a story about the emergence of the “reservoir of images” (Komunyakaa, 2000, p. 55) that would become his collection of poetry *Dien Cai Dau* (1988), a volume that depicts the Vietnam War through the perspective of an African-American serviceman. In the narrative, Komunyakaa is renovating a house—literally engaged in dismantling a room, uncovering surfaces, and reconstructing a space—when his writing process, carefully integrated into his physical labor, gives way to traumatic memory and enables him—through a shift in his “architecture of self” (Pinar, 1994)—to explore his long obscured experience. The acts of reconstruction that he describes, along with the writing that flows from them, symbolize, I suggest,

the work of cultivating a particular place for subjectivity—one in which “the multidimensionality and elusiveness” of experience can be engaged and from which social psychoanalytic study can be conducted (Pinar, 2011, p. 8).

In 1984, Komunyakaa (2010) explains, he had been teaching at the University of New Orleans, living in the Crescent City, and renovating a house there. It was summertime, when the “familiar tropic heat” of south Louisiana—the region of his birth and upbringing—conjured up the atmosphere of Vietnam, where in the late 1960s, he served as a military journalist, witnessing and documenting the horrors of the war (pp. 70–71). With “the weight of the Old South pulsating underneath a thin façade,” and a dislocating heat “edging in,” Komunyakaa (2000) renovated his house at 818 Piety Street in the Bywater district of New Orleans—this reworking of Southern architecture enabling him not only to confront “the ugly scars of [Southern] history” but also to hold, subjectively, the “psychic debris” of his Vietnam experience (p. 14). Komunyakaa (2010) “peel[ed] back the old surfaces of [the] house,” he tells us, facing a tumult of memory and history, as his physical labor doubled, symbolically, his psychical work. “Much had to be dismantled,” he explained, “and the dust from the horsehair plaster was flying everywhere” (p. 71).

Having inherited an understanding of physical labor as “sacred and spiritual,” and embracing the body’s presence in writing, Komunyakaa (2000) engaged in the work of tearing away “chipped and cracked horsehair plaster” as a poetic practice (p. 14). At the bottom of his ladder, he placed a pad of paper and a pen. Climbing the ladder, he gained access to the space created by the house’s high ceiling—“twelve- and fourteen-foot,” he explains, “where the stifling heat collected” (pp. 14–15). As he moved between the capacious ceiling area and the provisional space of writing, “each step down served as a kind of metrical device,” and the “volatile images” of Vietnam in his mind, through “the rhythm of [his] breath and work,” became the first lines of his nascent poetry (pp. 14–15). The integrated process of renovation and writing “uncapped [a] reservoir of images” he had resisted for fourteen years, enabling him first to write the poem “Somewhere Near Phu Bai” (p. 55). However, he explains, “it wasn’t a clearly thought-out process; it was just something that happened . . . it was the heat, and the dust, and the dismantling of things” (p. 71). “If I hadn’t written that particular poem on that particular day,” Komunyakaa continues, “perhaps I wouldn’t have written about the Vietnam experience at all” (p. 71).

In this narrative, Komunyakaa reveals a manner of encountering the “structural noncoincidence” of subjectivity—the fundamental condition of self-difference that, Bill Pinar (2011) argues, enables our reflection on experience; our memory and forgetting; and our agency—if haunted and fragile—in self-formation (p. 8). Komunyakaa (2000) expresses this noncoincidence as a layering of internalized landscapes, his subjectivity incorporating the toxicity and verdure of his south Louisiana home; the vibrancy and horror of his Vietnam experience; the architecture and ghosts of New

Orleans, and the particularities of the countless places—geographical, cultural, and textual—that he has inhabited. Poetry, for Komunyakaa, is a form of “inquiry” into this elusive “personal terrain”—an uncertain and circuitous exploration of subjective emplacement that, like free association in psychoanalysis, reconstructs as it dismantles the contours of the self and, perhaps, the “collective psyche” and social fabric that shape self-formation (p. 29).

### **Geographic Sensibilities**

My senses play with familiar dimensions of the landscape. Eight years ago, I moved to Washington, DC, from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, my hometown. In my present surroundings, I experience a doubling of the places of my youth. A canopy of red maple trees on 7th Street shelters my walk to Eastern Market. At the edges of my visual field, the canopy flickers, offering a glimpse of the live oaks on Park Boulevard in Baton Rouge that shaded me as I jogged when I was a high school athlete preparing for wrestling season. Walking through the city, I encounter improvised vegetable gardens—zucchini, turnip, and spinach plants lining walkways, crowding porches, and enveloping wrought iron fences. These gardens conjure up the many gardens I watched my father till, plant, and harvest at home and on his farm—makeshift gardens that were, like their urban counterparts, explorations of asymmetry. In the piles of squash and tomatoes lying on tables in DC’s farmers markets, I see the garden’s yield and my mother’s invitation, through her careful display of the produce she gathered, to future meals with the family. Leaves blanketing sidewalks; country and blues-infused bands playing street corners; the rain flirting with the morning, consuming the night—these features of the current landscape of my life evoke the environment of my upbringing and thus the origins of my “geographic sensibilities” (Bunkse, 2004, pp. 12–15), my manner of orienting to the places I inhabit and traverse.

In my attention to a new dwelling place, home appears, however tenuously, in nature, architecture, and the social world. This is no simple mimesis. The repetition of place in my sensory experience does not collapse the past into the present, erasing the distinctiveness of each. Resemblances between past and present landscapes do provide me a momentary sense of the unity of subjectivity in place—as though I never left my father’s garden, my mother’s kitchen, and the live oak-lined course of my adolescent individuation—but ultimately these doublings play as questions of otherness and difference. They draw me into a more complex sensory history, and they heighten my awareness of the unconscious fabric of thought that constitutes my sense of place.

A question at play in my associations to the DC landscape is what the psychic overlay of early and idealized environments—natural, familial, and cultural—might indicate about my present situation. For Southerners, a turn homeward is ineluctably freighted with the region’s traumatic history. No rendering of Southern place avoids what Komunyakaa (2000) acknowledges

as the foundation of his poetry: the intermingling of “beauty and terror” in the landscape (p. 86). Facing the monumental façade of DC and turning homeward through its Southern commonplaces, therefore, I begin again the work Bill Pinar suggests: calling obscured histories into my place of study.

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## 7 Excavating the Self

### The Archaeologies of Pinar and Hillman

*Mary Aswell Doll*

The prefix *re-* meaning “again” or “back”—as in reconceptualization or revisioning—has a large connotation for such a small syllable. To reconceptualize is to take a concept, presumably one well known, and think again about it, so as to wrest it back from what it has become. To revision psychology, similarly, is to take what is known about the subject and think deeper about its meanings based on its origins. Both William F. Pinar and James Hillman are ground breakers in their respective disciplines of education and psychology because both see serious wrongs that necessitate correction. Interestingly, both ground breakers addressed their concerns in the 1970s: Hillman in 1975 with his *Re-visioning Psychology* and Pinar in 1976 with his *Currere: Toward Reconceptualization*. Further, both thinkers rail against what they perceive as the ruination of their fields. For Pinar, the problem is the atheoretical and ahistorical turn to the assessment movement with its concomitant test taking and racing to the top—activities that have nothing whatsoever to do with educating the self for public service. For Hillman, his rage is against a field that narrowly defines the root word *psyche* (“soul”) to mean “ego,” which restricts the meaning of soul to persons only. Both thinkers address their concerns by rethinking subjectivity. And both thinkers have remained amazingly consistent with their seminal texts from the 1970s, suggestive of the idea, to use Hillman’s (1996) term, that both write from their own “acorn”: a central set of premises from which they make only slight deviations over the span of their careers. To bring Pinar and Hillman together is to celebrate the unique contributions both have made and share in excavating the self.

The *re-* prefix is important; it implies shift, movement, action. For Pinar, *re-* figures constantly in his writings. Restructure, research, reconstitute, reconfigure, and recover all imply that what is situated in the present must be visited again, entered imaginally again, so as to see anew what was once accepted, repressed, or overlooked. The again-ness of this move requires a necessary regress, back into the buried material of memory, shame, and suffering. Concomitantly, the “again” quality of regression propels another set of *re-* actions with such words as *recast*, *reactivate*, *recover*, and—importantly—*reconstruct*. These actions, for Pinar, are steps the intellect must take in order

to recover and reactivate an essence of the self that has been colonized—“draped” (2006, p. viii) by the identities placed on us by others. Revisiting the past requires an unveiling. Intellectuality thus partakes of a verbal quality, similar to what Pinar (1998) wrote of Maxine Greene’s concept: Action of the intellect is necessary if it is to yield “political engagement, critical inquiry, and cultural criticism” (p. 5). The intellectual work urged by Pinar (2004) seeks to “overcome the ‘self’ conceived by others” (p. 22) by actively engaging thought. For both Pinar and Hillman, subjectivity is a social construction, like identity or gender, which must be understood so as to be reconceptualized and revisioned if the real work of reform<sup>1</sup> can take place.

Hillman’s (1975) use of re-, as in re-visioning, is also an intellectual enterprise but one that uses the word “soul” “as the subject of the sentence” (p. 1), not intellect. Hillman’s intention is to reposition psychology with Neoplatonism and myth. Insisting on the soul as psychology’s rightful origin, Hillman (1982) grants it consciousness, consistent with Marsilio Ficino’s Renaissance notion of the *anima mundi*, or soul of the world. Writing to “return” the idea of soul to the world, Hillman shifts the orientation of psychology from *me* to *it*—*it* including the wild parts of the deeper self as well as all of nature: plants, trees, animals, dirt, and even buildings. This is a radical shift that seeks to understand our surroundings, endow them with faces and feelings, and “return value from the subject to the thing” (p. 87). Hillman’s political emphasis is clearly with the ecology movement, but also with “energy policy, nourishment, hospital care, the design of interiors” (p. 87). Pinar (2009a), too, sees the biosphere as a “place” to reconstruct the notion of an all-too-human humanism (p. 143) requiring “‘dirt’ research” (2012, p. 49): a remarkable syncretism with Hillman. What I see comparable between Pinar and Hillman is the radical nature of the shift. While Pinar insists on an active ability of the intellect to reconceptualize both the personal and the political, Hillman insists on returning primacy to the soul rather than the ego as psychology’s central purpose. Both envision a tensive relationship between inner and outer worlds, with an emphasis on a reawakened sense of the world without. The difference may lie with Pinar’s “concept” and Hillman’s “vision,” each, however, requiring a major re-adjustment to how we perceive thought and subjectivity.

I liken the work both thinkers undergo with archeology because I see them unearthing ideas that have grounded thought; I see them as diggers. What lies beneath commonly held views (beliefs) needs disturbance. For Pinar, education has become both atheoretical and ahistorical, usurped by corporations who equate learning with mastering facts. Students are clients. Even teachers must be corporatized to turn in success reports, administer pre- and post-tests, and receive raises based on student outcomes. For Hillman, psychology has ignored the symptom in place of the cure. But the symptoms, pathologies, and failures contain archetypal material that needs to be mined for both Hillman and Pinar. Diseases of the mind (Pinar) or diseases of the soul (Hillman) are but hidden layers of the self for which the



pill or the test is not the answer. In his *The Archeology of Knowledge*, Michel Foucault (1972) argues that the history of ideas contains layers, ruptures, breaks, and thresholds that belie the certainties their surfaces suggest. We get a false sense of any field if we take the surface presentation for the real thing. The same is true of the self. And so Foucault urges an opening up of “underground passages” in an attempt to have “consciousness [turn] upon itself in its deepest conditions” (pp. 13, 17). Such phrases ring well with the intentions of both Pinar and Hillman to eschew the simple cure for the interesting disease. Pinar (2009a) remarks that subjectivity is a “passage to the world” (p. 150). The thread through the labyrinth of the self is Pinar’s theory of *currere* with its four-phase meanders (1974, 1995, 2004, 2006, 2009a, 2012), with which Hillman shares multiple interesting aspects.

Let us start with regression, Pinar’s first phase of reconstructing the relationship between self and world. Hillman (1975) puts the idea this way: “Looking backward makes it possible to move forward” (p. 27); and “The dimension of our soul travel is downward” (p. xi). A move back and down, a regression, is for Pinar (2006) a “seeking what is lost” (p. 21): the unremembered, split off, denied parts of the self that remain unraveled (2012, p. 136). Self-work is a recovery operation, digging down deep in order to surface. Adrienne Rich (1972) writes, “the thing I came for: / the wreck and not the story of the wreck/the thing itself and not the myth” (in Gilbert and Guber, 1985, p. 1961). The whole of Margaret Atwood’s novel *Surfacing* (1972) is a fictional extension of Rich’s poem. It is the story of the past’s negative hold on the present and the necessity to return to memory and place so as to resurrect, face, and destroy the “wreck” that past identities have caused for the present self: “If you look like them and talk like them and think like them then you are them” (pp. 151–152). Surfacing from the grip of the past is deep psychic work. This is what the alchemists called an “*opus contra naturam*,” a work against nature. Nature’s way is from the ground up, as in flowering, developing. But here the work is the other way, back down into the dark place of repressed images. This is soul territory. Pinar (2004), noting, Robert Musil, agrees: “In Musil’s analysis of European culture . . . the problem of the age is the severance of intellect from the soul” (p. 26). Putting the intellect and the soul together, regressively, is also the intention of depth psychology, which borrows from archetypal psychology but extends it. Hillman’s (1975) explanation is case in point: “Let us then imagine archetypes as the deepest patterns of psychic functioning, *the roots of the soul governing the perspectives we have of ourselves and the world*” (p. xiii; italics added for emphasis). The point of psychic mining is to prevent what Freud (1915) termed “the return of the repressed”; for, as we know, that which we hate about ourselves we project dysconsciously onto others. Clearly, Pinar’s (2004) regressive phase is “serious autobiographical work [that] requires the surfacing and re-incorporation of repudiated elements” (p. 39). These elements are the lies that stifle our ability to become full citizens. Hillman (1975) gives courage here by remarking that “our internal confusions are a latent richness” (p. xv), so that rather

than seeking to avoid working with unpleasantness, we should make every attempt “to find connections between life and soul” (p. ix). This understanding that our hidden psychic content needs re-searching is a shared concern, phrased by Pinar (2006) as “the source of outward activity” (p. 27) and by Hillman as “the working through resistances” (p. 91), conjoining treatment with fantasy (p. 74).

In this “autobiographical excavation” (Pinar, 2004, p. 22), the work from within is just beginning, in regression. For Hillman (1975) the primary method he advocates for accessing psychic depths is “reversion”: “the psyche reverts not only to escape reality but to find another reality . . . which makes sense” (p. 100). The engagement for Hillman (1975) is with the fantasy figures that bubble up from dream, where the hidden content of consciousness lives and presents itself through images that have “archetypal resemblances” (p. 99). Seeking to *stand under* the presence of these images, to understand them, one must “revert” (p. 99) to a deeper image source, which for Hillman (1975) is myth: “Only in mythology does pathology receive an adequate mirror, since myths speak with the same distorted, fantastic language” (p. 99). Attention to image is key to Hillman’s psychologizing. Hillman offers a way to “follow” what the image “says” by paying attention to the prepositions used in describing the image. Say it is “inside” a room “on” the floor “next” to the window. So particular, so exact: A picture is drawn. For Hillman, “the dark spaces of the infinitely unknown . . . are filled with fantasy, thereby receiving a precisely particular pattern” (p. 248). For Pinar (2009), this method is called “the primacy of the particular.”

The importance of regressing, for both Pinar and Hillman, cannot be overstated: It is the first principle of re-cognizing the self in a way that will enlighten public activity. The work from within is necessarily solitary, requiring space and time away from distraction and noise. Pinar (2004) references Virginia Woolf’s “room of one’s own” as a place, literally, to allow space, figuratively, to converse with oneself “without which one disappears onto the social surface, into the maelstrom that is the public world” (p. 23). While Hillman privileges dream work and correspondence with myth, Pinar offers meditation and writing as a way to practice self-reflexivity, practices that can be enhanced by the work students and teachers do in the classroom.

In Pinar et al. (1995) progressive phase of *currere*, psychic work is aesthetic. Invoking aesthetic experience as a necessary distancing foil, Pinar considers reading (film, too) as a means to access the fantasy powers of mind that can alter a taken-for-granted reality by presenting other worlds. The aesthetic experience opens a passage from the regressive moment to the progressive moment, when what is experienced as different is fundamentally disruptive:

This conscious and explicit participation in an aesthetic experience—it becomes like an archeology—illustrates the reciprocity of objectivity and subjectivity in the student’s and teacher’s experience of the curriculum. . . . In this way . . . the aesthetic process [shares] that distancing

from the everyday and the familiar in order to see them with a freshness and immediacy which is like seeing them for the first time.

(p. 415)

Were space not offered for reflection, it is doubtful that a passage from past to present can occur.

Since I teach literature, I try to select works that will distance my student readers and offer them this space. I teach Virginia Woolf, because she mines the self; Richard Wright, because his rage is molten; Samuel Beckett, because he comes at everything from the other side. Too often, however, students like a text because they can “relate” to it. This is a problem. This is not *currere*, nor is it reconceptualizing the classroom as a place where “alterity structures and animates complicated conversation” (Pinar, 2004, p. 188). Writing essays is painful work for my artist students, who major in such hip fields as advertising, animation, and (ironically, for this essay) interior design. But writing is a way of providing passage from inchoate feeling to formed thought. Occasionally, student writing evidences the sort of break through Pinar urges. In my myth class, for instance, I teach the hero journey for its problematic. It is too easy to slay the dragon if the dragon or the Minotaur is only perceived as unrelated to the self. It is too easy to herald self-heroics when one can capture the severed head of the Minotaur as a trophy. Reconceptualized, the Minotaur is that which lurks within our labyrinths as the Other we despise because the Other is Us. My student Juan could be a curriculum theorist for his acuity in reading the image:

I have always had a direct fascination with the Minotaur. This abomination of mythology represents all that is wild and uncontrollable in the human mind. I am a Minotaur as are all humans in one sense or the other. This monster is my shadow and mask. In it I find shelter and relief from my human tendencies and in a way an excuse for my animal-like behavior that can be seen as savage. The Minotaur also encompasses an elegance that is found in the human body. It walks on two legs and moves in the fashion of man. The Minotaur has no real power except its strength. Nevertheless, the Minotaur continues to engulf our imaginations.

(Doll, 2011, pp. 29–30)

Allowing this passage from private to public by way of writing is the work that teachers can encourage, Pinar (2004) insists: “In the progressive phase of *currere*, one writes to become other, that which has been split off, denied” (p. 126). This is a freeing moment for writer, reader, and company. This opens the way for the buried Other self to become re-cognized.

But to appreciate what is being offered requires listening. The ear can hear nuances that the eye can miss. Beckett’s play *Ohio Impromptu* (1980b) for instance, features two characters: Reader, who reads aloud a sad personal

tale about loss and regret; and Auditor, who listens. Auditor, like other pairs in Beckett's *oeuvre*, is the Other who is ourselves, although split-off from consciousness. His silent presence, however, prompts memory. Too often we cannot hear our own memory words, but to have an Auditor there for our speakings? "What an addition to company that would be!" (Beckett, 1980a, p. 21). The paradox of the silent Other is that it allows mind to be set in motion by no-sound. This tensive relationship between Reader and Auditor would seem to mime the work Pinar urges in the classroom, which serves as a place to sound out ideas heard in the company of others.

In education, it is the teacher who can affect reconstructive work, be the Auditor for student readers. Pinar (2009a) recalls his teachers who inspired him by their intellect and commitment. He nominates an early influence with Mrs. Ott, who was both "erudite and engaging" (p. 144); his dissertation advisor Paul Klohr, who expressed "keen interest in theoretical developments" (p. 146); Don Bateman, who introduced him to "the intellectually serious study of education" (p. 147); a host of colleagues and students who inspired conversation; and his own father from whom he "internalized the injunction that 'understanding' was the most important thing in life" (p. 150). I cite this litany for the remarkable consistency of respect for the intellect Bill Pinar appreciates. This is a cohering principle of his—the importance of intellect, mind, and study. The one who takes on the role of teacher must mirror what the expectations for the students are by herself engaging in serious academic study—the words "academic" and "study" all important for "understanding." But also "mind" can be engaged with "pleasure," which Bill absorbed from his mother, "a night-club singer and regional radio personality" (p. 180). I think these two "often opposing dispositions" (p. 150) from his parents worked, if at an inchoate level, to inspire the necessary tension Bill Pinar advances, which celebrates the role aesthetics plays in the creation of mindful work.

Hillman (1982), too, insists on aesthetics as essential for soul work. In fact, aesthetics is one of his "universals," along with Justice. (Note the connection here between working *within* so as to work *without* that Pinar and Hillman share). It is aesthetics that offers passage from a psyche dead to the world to one enlivened by imagination, or, as Hillman puts it, "cordial reflex" (p. 81). Thinking with the heart awakens the poetic sense: "the move to the heart is already a move of poesis: metaphorical, psychological" (p. 81). To read the world anew necessitates finding the right "language," to read the world anew. For Hillman (1982), the move of poesis is prepositional and personifying, since things express meaning: "Thing-consciousness could extend the notion of self-consciousness" (p. 84). It is not just humans that suffer and feel, but the nonhuman world as well. Putting it that way, a move has occurred and a passage cleared to connect self with world; otherwise the outer world suffers because the inner world lacks vision. Turning things around gives things *their* subjectivity. As Robert Sardello puts it, "our buildings are anorexic, our business paranoid, our technology manic" (in Hillman, 1982, p. 75). As both

Pinar and Hillman make clear, the move toward awakened self-consciousness is not the ultimate one. Joanne H. Stroud (2012) interprets Hillman's intentions, echoing Pinar's, when she writes of the need for public engagement: "It is not an acceptable excuse to be unaware. . . . With increased self-knowledge, the movement is back into the world" (p. 12). A return to the world involves analysis, a word both Pinar (2012) and Hillman (2012) invoke by examining the Latin roots: "*ana*" [which] means 'up, throughout'; "*lysis*" means 'a loosening' (Pinar, 2012, p. 46) or, a "setting free, deliverance, dissolution, collapse, breaking bonds and laws, and the final unraveling" (Hillman, 2012, p. 92). Here we have, for both theorists, the signal importance of shattering the ego's hold so as to release imagination. Ultimately, this loosening offers ethical conduct, which Hillman (1982) calls "soul in the world" and Pinar refers to as analysis, the third phase of *currere*. A continuum of time has moved the notion of *currere* from present to past and now to future. To avoid world as Holocaust (Hillman, 2012, p. 150) or as Weimar Republic (Pinar, 2012), both thinkers urge analysis of the role of self in the formation of history. For the self to comprehend its historical situatedness, Pinar (2009b) envisions a cosmopolitan curriculum that must cultivate "comprehension of alterity" (p. vii). This is understood by Hillman (2000) as justice with a capital J, which leads psychology toward "moral and political philosophy" (p. 16). Here, the archaeological dig into the self has released subjectivity from its narrow confines in the pots and shards of narcissism so as to engage with the serious work of worldliness. The passage to such work is an aesthetic turn for both thinkers, through metaphor (Hillman) or allegory (Pinar).

Hillman's (2012) insistence on metaphor releases thinking from literalism, which is understanding without nuance, without an "under sense" (p. 232). We can see in those "under" words Hillman's shared sense with Pinar that without regressing there can be no depth, no inner work. Hillman (2000) admits that he "stumbled" on the importance of the backward move by suggesting "a poetic basis of mind" (p. 14). Yes, Kronos eats his children. But this is a metaphor for the father's fear of the phallic power of the son. Yes, Oedipus kills his father; but, again, this can be understood metaphorically as the son seeking to overcome his father by eliminating the patriarch's demands. Yes, Persephone lives for a time in Hades, but this can be understood metaphorically as the time when seeds grow in darkness. These big story lines are meant to be read on another level with cosmic, not literal, importance. Allegory for Pinar has this same two-level relationship: past/present; specific/general; local/universal; actual/potential; abstract/concrete; resemblance/difference. What is at work in the work is an interplay among and between the opposites to generate understanding that goes beyond the personal. The transformation that occurs by allowing the tensions to play off each other is alchemical, syncretical, cosmological: archeological.

In the synthesis phase of his theory of *currere*, Pinar advances his own theory, articulated first in 1976, to include this turn to poetics. By invoking allegory (2012), he embraces the idea of complication. Etymologically, the word

*complication* means “folded longitudinally one or more times, as the wings of certain insects: to fold together.” The word *complicated* means “involved, tangled, knotty.” These derivations help us to see differently how a conversation ravel itself many times, one thought after another, forming knots (or insect wings). The process is natural, involving small segmented moments. To have a complicated conversation is “to situate a curriculum where national history and culture are explained, worked through, and recreated” (2012, p. 223). He explains, “No longer a flat line . . . the present becomes a palimpsest” (2012, p. 47). This strange word *palimpsest* means “writing that is erased to make room for another text.” I see this erasure as one of the wings of the insect, folded now so as to allow flight. This is the tangle that conversation must unravel. And the many folds within this complication means that all is connected, knotty. I am allegory; the curriculum is allegory; to understand is to engage in complicated conversation.

Curriculum’s root is *currere*, the running of the course. Always interested in origins, be these of words or of the unexplored regions of the self, Bill Pinar’s work is original. He has never left the psychology of his ideas, which relates him in my opinion with depth psychologist James Hillman. Both thinkers know the roots of things. Both thinkers see that thought requires activity, and subjectivity requires revisioning. For Pinar, it is important to remember that the curriculum with which we engage in the classroom is not static nor does it involve racing to the top. To run is not to race. Running the course in a reconstructed curriculum is slow work, like excavation. Favored beliefs need to be overturned. The shovel needs to dig deeper to root out those prejudices that hold thought back. Thus dissolved, what was once literal can open out into metaphor or allegory so as to visualize and conceptualize anew.

## Note

- 1 *Reform* is a word used by educationists to justify the testing movement, so Pinar never uses that word, wittingly writing *deform* to convey his contempt.

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## 8 Reflection on a Poor Curriculum

With a Nod to Edgar Morin

*William E. Doll, Jr.*

The title and subject of William Pinar and Madeline Grumet's book, *Toward a Poor Curriculum* (1976), has fascinated me for years. We usually do not think of a curriculum as "poor": after all, a curriculum—a sequential listing of courses or tasks one is to follow to obtain a set goal (diploma or certificate)—has been devised by experts in the field. Our task as teachers is to follow the path laid out for us by those more knowledgeable than we, and to be sure our students follow the same path. Moving toward a poor curriculum, as a desired and hence good end, seems to be moving in the wrong direction.

The word *poor* has many definitions. We talk of poor relations, poor teaching, poor people, and a poor (not well done) event. All of these carry a negative connotation. The O.E.D. (Oxford English Dictionary, online 2000) devotes twenty-five pages to the word *poor*. Some of the more interesting listings are *Poor Richard's Almanac*, the Poor Clare nuns, and the colloquial phrase, "poor as a church mouse." The word itself is Anglo-Norman and made its first appearance in English literature around 1225 A.D., "Gif hie was poure." The common theme running through the O.E.D. usages is that of deficiency or lack, either of quantity (usually money) or quality (of skill, ability, personality). The sense of deficiency or lack carries with it a feeling of inferiority. Again, Pinar and Grumet's sense of moving toward a poor curriculum intrigues us as readers and challenges common usage. On the first page of their book, Pinar and Grumet ask:

What is a poor curriculum? What is *currere*?<sup>1</sup>

A poor curriculum is one stripped of its distractions. Stripped of video tape, fancy books and buildings, values, clarification and individualized instruction.

Stripped of all the clothing we drape around ourselves to keep us from *seeing*.

(Preface, p. vii; emphasis added)

In reading this definition of poor, one could say the authors swirled the word *poor* around. What Pinar and Grumet ask us to see, many have missed: the



virtues and values in a “poor or stripped down” curriculum. Playing with the concept of a curriculum “stripped of its distractions,” I wonder if there is a connection between the *seeing* of Pinar and Grumet and of those nuns who have shed conventional clothing for “Habits.” Do these “habits” encourage the nuns to be less distracted social and intellectual selves?

*Currere*—as an alternative to the usual approach to curriculum—Pinar and Grumet propose *currere*. Their brilliant achievement is more than running the track we call curriculum.<sup>2</sup> It focuses on our existential being, reflected upon, and developed, as we interact with the external—the imposed curriculum. To quote Pinar: “*currere* refers to my existential experience of external structures: what happens to me as I go through the process of not just learning the material presented but of reflecting on myself as person” (p. vii). Pinar continues, “The method of *currere* is a strategy devised to disclose this experience” (p. vii).

My comments on the particulars of *currere* will be few: Others have explored this concept better than I.<sup>3</sup> It is the notion of method itself, method as method, which I wish to explore. The method of *currere*—regressive-progressive-analytical-synthetical—is temporal; it is the evolution of one’s Self over periods of time (Ch. 4).<sup>4</sup> In this evolution there is a continuing search for (and progression towards) “the deep structure of my being” (p. 54). The regressive and beginning phase looks to the personal past. The regressive “returns to the past, to capture it as it was, and as it hovers over the present” (p. 55). In the progressive, “we look the other way . . . at what is not yet present” (p. 58), but which may, over time and with certain meditations, present itself to view. The analytical and synthetical focus on the present itself. The analytical focuses on “the present exclusive of the past and future inclusive of responses to them” (p. 59). Here one acquires a certain detachment, freeing oneself from experiences, but not from responses to these experiences. The responses are of our making and hence aligned with us. The analytical process allows freedom. Freedom to “choose the present and future” (p. 60), the synthetical (syn—together + tithenai—to place), is to “make it all of a whole . . . intellections, emotions, behavior” (pp. 60–61). This whole is represented, indeed “occurs in and through the physical body” (p. 61). “The physical body is the concrete manifestation of all that occurs in and through it”; and “The Self is available to itself in physical form.” With “Mind in its place, I conceptualize the present situation. I am placed together. Synthesis” (p. 61).

The power of *currere*—essentially “the investigation of the nature of the individual experience” (Pinar, 1975, p. 400) or the individual’s “active reconstruction of his [or her] passage through its social, intellectual, physical structures” (Grumet, 1976, p. 111)—can be found in an integrated reading of *Curriculum Theorizing* (1975, especially, Chapters 21–24) along with all of *Toward a Poor Curriculum* (1976). Throughout these two early books, one sees Pinar’s beginning quest for a Method.

A questing curriculum and complexity theorist, I am attracted to the writings of both William Pinar and Edgar Morin. In the mid-1970s, each brought forth his own search for and sense of a new method.

## Edgar Morin

“Subjectivity . . . is the fundamental inquiry of oneself on oneself”

(Morin, Vol. 1, p. 87)

In the Introduction to his first *Volume of Method*, “The Nature of Nature” (1979),<sup>5</sup> Morin brings forth the question: Who are We? He follows this up in the General Introduction, “The Spirit of the Valley” (1979), where he asks: “What is Man, What is the World, What is Man in the World?” (p. 7). These questions run through all of Morin’s work, as I believe they do in Pinar’s.<sup>6</sup>

Scientific thought, heavily influenced by Rene Descartes’ sense of certainty, has totally obliterated the question of subjectivity. Morin says (Vol. 1, p. 23), for all “the French knight’s emphasis on doubt, his underlying faith lies with the certainty of his method”—a method of “Rightly Conducting The Reason and Seeking Truth in the Field of the Sciences” (Descartes, 1950[1637]). This method, separating objects (*res extensia*) from thinking beings (*res cognitans*) splits object and subject, and ironically objectivizes the latter. Descartes’ faith in the certainty of his thinking—<sup>7</sup> based on the “clear and distinct ideas” he has—rests ultimately in his relation to God (p. 25).<sup>8</sup> This relation excludes us as fallible humans. Morin believes that we, in our humanity, with all our full complexity, including doubts, prejudices, hopes, dreams, biases, failures, insights, neuroses, must be included in any scientific attempt to acquire knowledge. He says, we can no longer accept “that knowledge be founded on the exclusion of the knower” (General Introduction, p. 9). Science needs to turn its methods of questioning not just on the objects it studies but on itself. Unless it does, it can “not know itself,” nor have “means of knowing itself scientifically. . . . This is the problem of the science of science” (p. 9).

When the “French knight” lived (1596–1650), scientists were just beginning to explore the sky (telescope, early 1600s) and just after his death, the miniscule world of cells and bacteria (microscope, mid 1600s). As a physicist, philosopher, and mathematician, Descartes was a leading figure in the new intellectual movements of his time; however, the official physical and metaphysical doctrine remained firmly rooted in Ptolemaic, not Copernican, thinking. Descartes realized this and was careful not to incur the wrath of the Catholic Church. He kept his Copernican thinking mostly to himself. The earth remained the center of the universe, the stars fixed in their firmament, and an all-powerful God ruled over all.

Over the centuries, both physics and its metaphysics changed. The twentieth century, with its radio-telescopes orbiting in space, shows us not stars fixed in their firmament, but a cosmos full of turbulence and creativity, occurring simultaneously. In the realm of the sub-atomic, we find “a delirious subatomic soup of photons, electrons, neutrons, protons” (Morin, Vol. 1. p. 34). It is the turbulence found in both these realms that Morin believes encourages us to question our simple sense of Reality. To understand an expanded sense of the Real, we need a new method, one based not on certainty and equanimity, but on uncertainty and disorder, occurring simultaneously. This is a turbulent, chaotic, and uncertain cosmos in which we live. Morin says:

We must change worlds. The universe inherited from Kepler, Galileo, Copernicus, Newton, Laplace was a cold, chilling universe of celestial spheres, of perpetual order, of moderation, of equilibrium. We must swap it for the warm universe of flaming clouds, balls of fire, irreversible movements, of order mixed with disorder, of expenditure, of waste, imbalance. The universe inherited from classical science was centered. The new universe is acentric, polycentric. . . . The old universe was a perfectly regulated watch. The new universe is an uncertain cloud.

(p. 58)

In that uncertain cloud, full of elements and particles swirling around, Morin finds the origin of life, an origin not given by a “master concept” (General Introduction, p. 13) but one created from interactions in that “delirious subatomic soup.”

### “The Production of Self”

In the beginning of their book, Pinar and Grumet ask “What is Curriculum? What is *currere*?” Juxtaposing questions places the focus on the relation between that observed (the object, curriculum) and the observing person (the subject). The two are intertwined. To quote Pinar (1976): “*Currere* refers to my existential experience of external structures, what happens to me as I go through the process of not just learning the material presented but of reflecting on myself as person” (p. vii).<sup>9</sup> Pinar goes on: “The method of *currere* is a strategy devised to disclose this experience” (p. vii). Morin, too, is interested in the relation between object and subject. He asks the question(s) “What is Man? What is the World? What is Man in the World?” While Pinar and Morin, writing in the mid-1970s, are each interested in the relation between object and subject, Pinar’s emphasis is on the subjective, the Being of a subject. Morin focuses on the subject encased within a system. Morin’s

system is not a simple system; it is a complex system with complexity being its very foundation. Morin says:

Complexity is the base. . . . [T]here is no longer anywhere . . . a simple empirical base, a simple logical base. The simple is but an arbitrary moment of abstraction torn from complexity. . . . Genesis is complex. The particle is hypercomplex . . . Organization is complex. Evolution is complex. . . . This is to say that everything is complex. . . . Complexity emerges, we have said, as a darkening, as disorder, uncertainty, antimony . . . [and] by the same token, disorder, darkening, uncertainty, antimony impregnate a new type of comprehension and explanation, that of complex thought.

(Morin, Vol. 1, p. 387)

It is common today to consider three types of systems: the physical/mechanical (which, with its set standards, dominates educational research and curriculum development), the biological (which only in the past few decades has emerged from the shadow of the physical/mechanical, and brought forth the permeable and irreversible), and the anthropological/social (where is nested the individual—"the fundamental inquiry of oneself on oneself").<sup>10</sup> What is interesting about all systems, at least since the Macy Conferences in the 1940s on cybernetics (Hayles, 1999; von Foerster, 1949), is that all are active, dynamic, even turbulent. It is the activity—dynamic, turbulent, creative—found in the cosmos and subatomic that draws Morin to search for a new method, one founded on complexity itself.

Morin's new method, his method-beyond-method (Doll, n.p.), with its emphasis on complex thinking, is encased in his concept of system. Looking at the history of systems, Morin says that organization is a "concept absent from the majority of the definitions of system" (Vol. 1, p. 99). Seeing organization as key, Morin gives his definition of system: "A global unity organized by interrelations between elements, actions, or individuals" (p. 99). The importance of organization is that it "*transforms, produces, binds, maintains*" (p. 101, emphasis in original). In short, it is what makes a system a system; and in taking a deeper look at organization, Morin brings forth some interesting observations. For example, in systems thinking, it is usual to state that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts; the whole as a unity adds something, its own global sense, to the parts summed in their isolation. Morin notes, though, that *the whole is also less than the sum of its parts*. The whole emerges from an interaction of the parts (p. 124), but this emergence can be, indeed often is, a simple one, one which in its simplicity loses the richness of the parts and their own individuality: "What is the cosmos but a totality in polycentric dispersion whose riches are disseminated in little archipelagoes? . . . The idea of totality becomes so much the more

beautiful and rich as it ceases to be totalitarian . . . as it becomes Complex” (p. 127). Earlier Morin says:

As soon as we conceive a system, the idea of global unity imposes itself to such a point that it blinds us, which means that instead of reductionist blinding (which sees only constitutive elements), there follows “holistic” blinding (which sees only the whole).<sup>11</sup>

(p. 109)

What is needed, says Morin, is an understanding of the relation between particular and whole, local and global, individual and environment, subject and object, closedness and openness, order and disorder. It might be called the mutuality of these differences that we need to understand. As he says:

The conception stated here places us directly beyond reductionism and “holism,” by calling on a principle of intelligibility which integrates the partial truth in both: there must not be an annihilation of the whole by the parts, nor of the parts by the whole. It is important, therefore, to highlight the relations between parts and whole, where each term returns to the other. . . . In truth, still more than mutual return, it is interrelations [relations among relations] which tie the explanation of the parts to that of the whole and reciprocally is, in fact, invitation to a recursive description and explanation.<sup>12</sup>

(p. 122)

For Pinar and for Morin, the individual, the person, the subject is key. While Morin does place the individual in a system frame—an unusual system as it places a strong emphasis on the active role of the subject—he also says, “Subjectivity . . . is the fundamental inquiry of oneself on oneself” (Vol. 1, p. 87), and “no science has wanted to know . . . the knowledge of the subject knowing” (General Introduction, p. 5). Pinar and Morin are very different people—one a world-renowned curriculum theorist who has re-written the concept of curriculum; the other a French sociologist who has spent a lifetime asking Who Are We? Placing these two in dialogical conversation—complicated and complex—has produced curricular and even life insights that reading only one or the other would not yield.

## Notes

- 1 Exploring the linkage between curriculum and *currere* has been Pinar’s lifelong work.
- 2 Much work has been done on how John Calvin changed the word curriculum—an oval or circle around that Roman chariots raced—to a narrow and linear path good Protestants were to follow. The writings of Stephen Triche and Douglas McKnight (2004) are a good place to start an exploration of the effects of Protestantism on the

Western notion of curriculum. Daniel Tröhler's book, *Languages of Education* (2012), is a fine companion piece.

- 3 I refer readers to Jung Hoon Jung's second chapter in his dissertation 2015 for an excellent analysis of *currere* and its effect on him. A later and fuller analysis of *currere* occurs in Pinar's 2014 book, *What Is Curriculum Theory?* Second Edition.
- 4 Chapter 4 was written by Pinar.
- 5 Morin's Method (*La Methodé*) is a six-volume work, compiled over a quarter century, 1977–2004. In these volumes, Morin searches for an understanding of Humankind in all its various forms. For more on Morin's Method, see my "Seeking a Method-Beyond-Method: Reflections on Edgar Morin" (n.p.) The first volume of Method, the only one currently translated into English, focuses heavily on physical science and its sense of organization. The other volumes, all in French, focus on biological life (2), knowledge (3), complexity thought (4), the humanities (5), and ethics (6).
- 6 Alfonso Montuori, in his "Edgar Morin: A Partial Introduction" (2004), brings forth the existential quality of Morin's work: his "grounding in the live experience of the realities of existence," of death as well as life, of his own self-critique, of the role pop culture plays, "of the extremes of which humans are capable, from the genocidal to the sublime" (pp. 350–351). Montuori believes Morin's view is truly "holographic." I see a kinship between what Montuori says about Morin and what Pinar says about *currere*.
- 7 In contrasting his own method, based on uncertainty, with Descartes', based on certainty, Morin says: "Today there must be put in doubt the very principle of the Cartesian method. . . . We can set out only in ignorance, uncertainty, confusion" (*General Introduction to Method*, p. 10).
- 8 Descartes says: "The very principle which I took as a rule to start with, namely, that those things which we conceived very clearly and very distinctly are all true, is known to be true only because God exists. . . . From this it follows that our ideas or notions being real things which come from God insofar as they are clear and distinct cannot to that extent fail to be true" (1950 [1637], p. 25).  
Michel Serres, French philosopher, physicist, teacher, chaotician, plays with Descartes' calling on God for his ultimate confirmation of certainty. Says Serres: In "the game of truth," Descartes "always wins" for he makes a "maximum maximorum" move, "he brings in an all-powerful and truthful associate: God Himself . . . Error has been checkmated" (1983, p. 27).
- 9 Donna Trueit (personal communication) points out that in this process of *currere* one does not "just learn the material presented," but explores the material deeply, that is in relation to one's experience. The key here is the act of personal reflection (recursion in chaos/complexity terms), an act rarely addressed in our usual sense of curriculum, but an act necessary for a deeper understanding.
- 10 Morin (General Introduction) points out that in the triumvirate of systems—physics/biology/anthropology—each has historically remained isolated from the other, with the only link being "the reduction of biology to physics, of anthropology to biology" (p. 12). Thus, reductionism has become *the* method; a method Morin believes simplifies, simplicates.
- 11 While Morin is a systemist, even categorizing Saussure as such (Vol. 1, p. 99), he also recognizes the trap of looking at the world using only a system lens: "My aim, though integrally systemic, is opposed to the majority of systemist positions which, believing they have overcome the paradigm of simplification by refusing to reduce the system to its components, succumb [to the same] paradigm by reducing all things and all being to the notion of system." (p. 150)
- 12 The notions of interrelations and recursions have strong curriculum implications. A curriculum built around these two is akin, I believe, to Dewey's interactions and continuity (1938, Ch. 3) and to Pinar's horizontality and verticality (2007).

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## 9 Two Groundbreaking Ideas of William F. Pinar

### Curriculum as Complicated Conversation and Study as the Site of Education

*Peter P. Grimmett*

This chapter comprises three parts. Parts 1 and 2 take two of William Pinar's ideas to show their impact on the field of curriculum: The first part characterizes Pinar's idea of curriculum as complicated conversation around historical and contemporary discourses as an evocative invitation to hold the kind of complicated worldview that enables one to deal ethically with "the Other"; and the second characterizes his view of study as the site of education: a "spot of time" that nourishes and invisibly repairs the curriculum mind by unlocking the door to pedagogy. The third part takes these two ideas to demonstrate instances of their practicability in addressing a strategic visioning exercise and the building of intellectual vibrancy in a curriculum department.

Pinar (2012) characterizes curriculum as "complicated conversation, as communication informed by academic knowledge" (p. xiii). Informed by theory in the humanities, arts, and interpretive social sciences, curriculum theory is the scholarly effort to understand the curriculum conceived as "complicated conversation." He writes:

The curriculum occurs through conversation within and across the school subjects and academic disciplines. . . . *In the service of educating the public, curriculum is characterized by spirited and informed communication. . . . Because the curriculum is that complicated conversation between teachers and students over the past and its meaning for the present as well as what both portend for the future, curriculum theory is focused on educational experience. . . . The curriculum is our key conveyance into the world.*

(p. 30, pp. 1–2, emphasis in original)

My premise here is that the purpose of curriculum as a complicated conversation is to render a complicated worldview. I first became intrigued with this focus when Mark Halvorson and I did our (2010) essay review of Pinar et al.'s 1995 important book, *Understanding Curriculum*. What intrigued me was the notion that some of the teacher educators with whom I was



working at the time spoke glowingly about “the Other” using terms constructed in the discourses that the book introduced but failed to display the intended understanding when acting on curriculum issues that arose in educating beginning teachers. For example, if situations arose in which there were conflicts between the normalization of practice in beginning teachers and issues of power, social justice, and discursive reality, they would often revert to an instrumentalist approach in their instruction wherein they were apparently unaware of the power relationship they enjoyed over students. Yet the purpose of Pinar et al. was to introduce readers to understanding curriculum through the various discourses they described; it was not, in my view, to arm people with a form of rhetoric (even though language was and still is important to the authors) that was devoid of profound understanding, but to enable them to see curriculum as having many diverse perspectives that connected with it and shaped it. Hence, the idea of curriculum as a complicated conversation was introduced as a way of developing deep understanding of the complex issues that teachers face in today’s classrooms. What intrigued me was how some teacher educators could not grasp that the mere mouthing of the rhetoric of the discourses presented in the book was not sufficient to display an understanding of curriculum that ran deep. Indeed, it seemed to me that this represented a lack of understanding, the very opposite aim of what the authors were attempting to foster. The point of connection I wish to make here is that a lack of deep understanding of curriculum as a complicated conversation about different and sometimes conflicting discourses can lead to a facile worldview, whereas my premise is that the purpose of curriculum as complicated conversation is to render a complicated worldview. I am not in any sense attempting to suggest that curriculum as complicated conversation does not typically lead to a complicated worldview; rather, in trying to make sense of those limited occasions when a discourse has apparently taken on a normative quality akin to a regime of truth and not been internalized into our deeply personal spaces, I am arguing that a complicated worldview is the manifestation of a curriculum-as-complicated-conversation process.

Running through my thinking here is the assumption that we see ourselves as we are, when we are caught off-guard or in our dark moments; the rest may be said to be rhetoric. That is, our imaginations, our secret thoughts, our habits of mind are the things that mark our ethical dealings with alterity. If we are to avoid an oversimplified worldview, then we must possess an understanding of our dealings with the “Other” that runs deep in our “Being,” what Heidegger referred to as “*das Dasein*.” Heidegger characterized “*das Dasein*” as a way of being involved with and caring for the immediate world in which one lived, while always remaining aware of the contingent element of that involvement, of the priority of the world to the self, and of the evolving nature of the self itself. The opposite of “*Dasein*” is the forfeiture of a person’s meaning and destiny through an escapist disengagement from the public everyday world, an escapism that leads

inevitably to an anonymous, identical world of the “They” and “Them.” Following Nietzsche’s critique of the subject as something definable in terms of consciousness, Heidegger distinguished “*Dasein*” from everyday consciousness in order to emphasize the critical importance “Being” has for our understanding and interpretation of the world. As he noted (1962) in *Being and Time*:

The question of Being aims . . . at ascertaining the *a priori* conditions not only for the possibility of the sciences which examine beings as beings of such and such a type, and, in doing so, already operate with an understanding of Being, but also for the possibility of those ontologies themselves which are prior to the ontical sciences and which provide their foundations. *Basically, all ontology, no matter how rich and firmly compacted a system of categories it has at its disposal, remains blind and perverted from its ownmost aim, if it has not first adequately clarified the meaning of Being, and conceived this clarification as its fundamental task.*

(Section 3, p. 31; emphasis in original)

Haugeland (2005, p. 423) argued that “*Dasein*” is “*a way of life* shared by the members of some community.” As Haugeland notes, there is an analogy here, one that Heidegger himself draws, with the way in which we might think of a language existing as an entity; that is, as a communally shared way of speaking. This appeal to language and community takes on a distinctive philosophical shape as Heidegger pursued his argument in *Being and Time*. Whereas Husserl’s phenomenology influenced Heidegger’s approach, it is important to note the distinctive way in which he worked. In the Heideggerian framework, phenomenology is not to be understood as the study of how things merely appear in experience; rather, in a recognizably Kantian staging of the idea, Heidegger follows Husserl (1913/1983) in conceiving of phenomenology as a theoretical enterprise that takes ordinary experience as its point of departure, but which, through an attentive and sensitive examination of that experience, aims to reveal the *a priori* transcendental conditions that shape and structure it.

Here I am attempting to explore how people can absorb historical and contemporary discourses in curriculum without examining in an attentive and sensitive way the *a priori* transcendental conditions that have shaped and structured their engagement with such discourses. Put differently, I am trying to make a case that, for curriculum to be seen as a fully complicated conversation, the engagement with contemporary discourses needs to be complicated by an expectation that those involved in the conversation must also clarify their meaning of Being as it relates to the curriculum discourses, and conceive of this clarification as a fundamental task. And I’m suggesting that the evidence that this has happened will be manifested not merely in a somewhat surface-like grasp of the discourses, but in a deepened understanding that renders a complicated worldview.

David Rakoff, a Canadian writer, had a complicated worldview. A self-described gay Jewish-Canadian transplant to New York City (Fox, 2012), he was a social anthropologist of postmodern life. His (2005) book, *Don't Get Too Comfortable*, is subtitled "The Indignities of Coach Class, The Torments of Low Thread Count, The Never-Ending Quest for Artisanal Olive Oil, and Other First World Problems" and also consists of comical autobiographical essays. The overriding theme is the absurdity and excessiveness in American life: the book is about luxuries and privileges being treated as deserved rights. Rarely have greed, vanity, selfishness, and vapidness been so mercilessly and wittily portrayed.

In *Half Empty* (2010) Rakoff argued that this book of essays is:

a defense of melancholy, pessimism, anxiety and all of the emotions that have been tarred with the brush of negativity and therefore stricken from the larger cultural conversation. I hope to argue . . . that, while these emotions may well be hedonistically less pleasant, they remain necessary and even beautiful at times.

(World Heritage Encyclopedia, 2014)

Hence, his complicated worldview: Shaped by his family history and personal circumstances, he knew that the world is tragic, full of injustices and things that make us angry, against which we have to fight and kick back; but he was clear that our weapons are to be *love, kindness, and beauty*.

Such a complicated worldview is also characterized in literature framed around ancient myths. Margaret Atwood's (2005) novel, *The Penelopiad*, based on Homer's *Odyssey*, captures the symbolism of water as representing such a worldview:

Water does not resist. Water flows. When you plunge your hand into it, all you feel is a caress. Water is not a solid wall; it will not stop you. But water always goes where it wants to go, and nothing in the end can stand against it. Water is patient. Dripping water wears away a stone. . . . Remember you are half water. If you can't go through an obstacle, go around it. Water does.

(p. 43)

In order to escape the clutches of suitors while her husband Odysseus was away at sea, Penelope set up a large piece of weaving on her loom, calling it a shroud for her father-in-law, Laertes. All day she would work at her loom, weaving diligently. But at night she would undo what she had accomplished, so the shroud never grew. Penelope's raveling her tapestry by day and unraveling it by night was her water-in-action. Her desire was to stay true to Odysseus, but she did not do this naïvely. As a beautiful woman with the possibility of her husband never returning, she was wise enough to comprehend the complicated circumstances in which she found herself.

She understood that she would have suitors, ready to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by Odysseus' lengthy absence. She could not fight their power with force; she had to outwit them with love, kindness, and good deeds. She had to become as water. Hence, she enacted her scheme to weave a shroud for her ailing father-in-law, which she raveled by day and unraveled by night.

I want to argue that water, as the source of life, is analogous to a complicated worldview as it relates to the human soul. Like water in a stream with a logjam, in situations in which problems seem intractable and insurmountable, a complicated worldview is a source of life that finds a way to move forward. Water cannot flow when there is a logjam. Our dealings with "the Other" become ethically trammled when our worldview is shallow and naïve. Just as a logjam is released by raising the water level, so our dealings with "the Other" are compelled toward ethicality by a complicated worldview that arises from a complicated conversation.

## Spots of Time

There are in our existence spots of time, . . . whence . . . our minds  
Are nourished  
and invisibly repaired; . . . Such moments Are scattered everywhere.

(William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, Book XII)

A spot of time occurred for me when I came across Pinar's (2011) *The Character of Curriculum Studies*. It contains a seminal idea that sheds light on responsible curriculum making that nourished and invisibly repaired my mind. "Study [not learning] is the site of education" (Pinar, 2006, p. 120). We acquire knowledge and insight through the struggle of study for which every individual has the capacity, though not necessarily the will. Teaching may disseminate knowledge, but study enables understanding. Study arises not from compliance with instructions but from an aspiration to understand the shifting vicissitudes between self and circumstances. Here, Pinar is rectifying Tyler's distorted emphasis on learning technology.

Study, then, is central to self-formation. Self-formation arises from our appropriation of what is around us in the world; study builds our capacity for making choices, for developing focus, for exercising critical judgment that is so central to a well-formed character. Yet there is still far too much social engineering present in schooling. As Pinar says, "if only we make the right adjustments—in teaching, in learning, in assessment—it will hum, and transport us to our destination, the promised land of high test scores" (p. 109). The equivalent in art, for example, is that we will paint by numbers but not create something aesthetic; in music we will know the notes but not have musicality.

Tying learning to assessment and instruction creates, according to Pinar, two traps: (1) the intellectual trap that makes students dependent on teachers

for learning, and (2) the political trap, that holds teachers entirely responsible for student learning (Pinar, p. 120). Equally, in teaching, when we lead students into innovative content pedagogy using instrumentalist techniques, we place false expectations and irresponsible curriculum designs on prospective teachers.

Thus, Pinar's seminal idea about study's central place in education shows how current policy and practice in K–12 schooling violate the attainment of learning because of its misplaced and instrumentalist direct focus on learning in itself. Here permit me to juxtapose learning with happiness. We all want to be happy in some shape or form, and I dare say that all students want to learn. But the direct pursuit of them makes their attainment elusive. In other words, to focus narrowly and directly on either learning or happiness is to miss out because both sneak up on us when we least expect it. Happiness occurs when we become absorbed in meaningful activities and relationships; likewise, learning occurs, as Dewey (1997) has said, as a by-product of meaningful activity when we embrace the hard work of wise study and eschew a vacuous focus on learning, so central to the current audit culture that reifies the Tylerian cage.

My position is that teachers need to live in the tension between curriculum understanding and curriculum enactment. Living in the tension involves not falling into the trap of aligning design with Tyler's rationalist cage, but rather understanding how inappropriate decisions around approaches to learning can be re-directed toward practices framed around study-promoting educational activities.

It is in moments when we find ourselves given to irresponsible curriculum making by focusing directly on learning that our teacher minds need the nourishment and challenge of Pinar's idea about study. Subject matter content presented in a way that disregards (and sometimes silences) issues of power, gender, race, identity and biography, culture and language, and social justice calls for the provocative interruption of the taken-for-granted and the evocative enlarging of our pedagogical minds that Pinar's theorizing brings. His theorizing informs, evokes, provokes, and disrupts our mental frames about teaching. He reminds us that *discourse constructs reality*. As educators, we need purposefully to elude the Tylerian cage that severely diminishes possibilities in learning by embracing a re-conceptualized appreciation of educational activities that address the content indirectly. Pinar's idea of study as the site of education becomes a spot in time whence our minds as teachers are nourished and invisibly repaired around the topic of pedagogy. Without such laparoscopic<sup>1</sup> intervention, we will cease to be educators.

The criticisms—that Pinar does not engage with practice (Wraga, 1999a) and that his scholarship constitutes an arrogation of the curriculum field (Wraga, 1999b)—demonstrate a lack of understanding about the practicability of his ideas. Let me provide two examples.

In our attempt at strategic planning in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at UBC in 2012–2013, we focused on questions that follow

from Pinar's (2012) formulation of curriculum as complicated conversation. We spent time examining our past as we grappled with which aspects of our collective history as a department had shaped us as an academic unit. We examined which things from our past as a department did we need to conserve and which things did we need to let go. We then looked to the future to visualize possibilities, focusing on which principles and aims would be the important ones to shape our collective future. And we attempted to envision what we wanted the department to become five years hence. We finally brought these aspects past and future together to re-examine the present in order to mobilize ourselves to bring to form the priorities we held for our future together. We did this by addressing the following questions:

- 1 How can we join our past and present in a manner that represents wisdom?
- 2 How can we be brave and courageous about who we are and what we represent?
- 3 How can our work become prophetic in a degraded world?
- 4 What do we have to do now to make our work wise, courageous, and prophetic in the future?

The reference to prophetic and wisdom in the questions came from Block's (2009) claim that "to teach is to be a prophet in a degraded world" (p. 117) and his invocation that "wisdom is the joining of past and present" (p. 88). In engaging in a complicated conversation, we were attempting to mobilize ourselves for public service that takes place after the "evaporation" of the ego that regression to the past and contemplation of the future invites. As Pinar (2012) notes, "Engaging in such complicated conversation constitutes a curriculum in which academic knowledge, subjectivity, and society become reciprocally reconstructed" (pp. 10–11). And the purpose of such reconstruction, I argue, is a complicated worldview that derives from a profound understanding of one's subjectivity in relation to the "Other" and the world.

When taken seriously, Pinar's formulation of study as the site of education provokes us to grapple with what constitutes pedagogy. *When, as educators, we grapple with what we need to do in order to nurture appropriate curriculum conditions that propel all students in differentiated ways toward assiduous focused study to expand their minds through the understanding of new ideas, we are practicing pedagogy.* Pedagogy consists of teachers engaging in a complicated conversation about how their students' and their own subjectivities can be potentially re-constructed through activities framed around the subject matter that is central to teaching. Dewey (1997) insisted that when teachers focus directly on learning (as the audit culture compels them to do), rather than on the conditions and intentional activities that foster learning, they miss the point of pedagogy and their students miss out in learning opportunities. As he says so trenchantly, "frontal attacks are even more wasteful in learning than in

war” (p. 169). Hence, the aim of pedagogy is to foster student engagement, reflection, and experience through carefully thought-out activities that promote study.

Thus, the practice of pedagogy I derive from Pinar’s idea of study is one in which educational activities address the content *indirectly*. My position, however, goes beyond Pinar in claiming that, while the stimulus for thinking about educational activities arises from the curriculum, the actual enacting of those activities in keeping with the curriculum aims and content is also an important focus in itself, that is, pedagogy. In practice, a more technical discourse of pedagogy constructs the world of institutional text, determining what teachers *do*. I argue that, if we are keen to change the institutional context in which students learn, we need to understand how teachers create the educational activities they use to enact the curriculum. This is important because a pedagogical perspective enables the enactment of re-directive practices when teachers do not fully integrate the curricular aims they are working toward with the activities they choose. Hence, a pedagogical focus differs from a curriculum one in that it encompasses both how teachers can address the content indirectly and also how their practices can be re-directed when they attempt a potentially disastrous “frontal attack” on learning that often leads them into the instrumentalist trap.

At UBC, we have experienced how Pinar’s groundbreaking theorizing has provided “spots of time” that have nourished and invisibly repaired professorial minds in a diverse academic unit. His ideas have also confounded his critics by manifesting their practicability that in turn has helped cultivate a profound sense of intellectual vibrancy.

## Note

- 1 Invisible laser surgery that repairs internal injuries without disrupting the body or breaking the skin.

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## 10 The Politics of Presence

*Madeleine R. Grumet*

How difficult it is to start a piece when there is so much to say. In this collection, organized to celebrate Bill Pinar's contributions to the field of curriculum, Mary Doll has invited me to write about *currere*: the study of curriculum as educational experience. Bill was coming up with this construction just around the time that I met him in 1973 when he arrived at the University of Rochester as a young, new assistant professor in Education, and I arrived to start graduate study. In our first interview, I recall that this professor asked me what I thought of Virginia Woolf and if I had read *The Golden Notebook*. I had not read it, but you can be assured that I was fully literate by our second meeting. He wanted to know what interested me, and my interests and questions became the links in the program that evolved as my doctoral studies. Alienated from the social science that dominates educational research, I sought a method to study educational experience that could apprehend curriculum's complexity, the ways a particular person encounters a world coded in the academic disciplines situated in school. I had my own questions about *currere* that led me to study phenomenology and psychoanalysis. Is lived experience knowledge? What are the intimacies and transferences in the pedagogical exchanges of *currere*? These studies generated the essays that Bill invited me to contribute to, *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, published in 1976 while I was still a graduate student. To this day, his expectation that I would be present in my work guides my efforts; when confronted with an academic challenge to read, or write or teach, I know that what I write will be lifeless unless I bracket what I think is expected of me and emerge, to become present to the material, to locate myself in the work.

In this memory about what it was like to be Bill's student, I recall the relational foundation of the individuality that *currere* espoused: To be present is to be present to someone. Like the scholarship of so many of his graduate students at the University of Rochester and then at Louisiana State and the University of British Columbia, my work flourished, nurtured by his interest. Then, in the mid-1970s, as now, discussions of curriculum were all about intervention and dominated by social science, primarily psychology. In contrast, Bill's interest in a student's experience of the curriculum was radical; it still is.

In this essay I want to consider those elements of *currere* that challenged the conventions of educational research in the 1970s, and continue to this day: the specificity and plurality of subjectivity as it appeared in our autobiographical accounts of educational experience; the sensuality and worldliness of lived experience, and the politics of disclosure.

Writing about this project forty years later, the idea that educational experience resides in individual persons seems reasonable, perhaps, nonremarkable. Nevertheless, although it is widely acknowledged that consciousness is particular, evolving in the life history of each person, it is its expression that has been anathema in education. Despite our familiarity with the subordination of the student that is the legacy of education for salvation, for industry, for assimilation, histories of the tyranny that has been and is education continue to astound me. Cribiore's (2001) accounts of education in Greco-Roman Egypt astonished me as she revealed that era's insistence on memorization and repudiation of interpretation. Despite the fact that education was private, with teachers functioning as independent entrepreneurs employed by families to teach ancient texts in an ancient language, it was remarkably uniform. Cribiore cites this maxim from pharaonic Egypt: "The ears of youth are on his back; he listens when he is beaten" and reminds us of Plato's insistence that a child must be straightened "like a bent and twisted piece of wood" (p. 69). Bushnell's study of humanism's early pedagogies also displays the sadistic rituals that accompanied instruction. These practices, then and now, resonate with the fear that grown-ups have of children. That antiseptic word, *socialization*, pulses with their terror of the child's curiosity, interests, energies, passions, fury.

Because education is our great consolation, our ritual that wards off incessant change and risk, a complicity of generations has ensured that the person will not appear. Foucault (1977) has helped us to recognize how our institutions have functioned to shape our compliance, disciplining our actions, our expressions, even our impulses, replacing urgency with hesitation. It is this erasure that Pinar repudiated. In his own retrospective work that addresses *currere*, *The Character of Curriculum Studies* (2011a), he describes it as "a concept I invoked 40 years ago to underline the significance of the individual's experience of the school curriculum" (p. xii). Sounds mild enough, but what I want to consider in this essay is the politics of this project. For here he is asserting not only the individualism of a person's experience, but also "underlining the significance" of a person's response to a course of study that has been designed to ignore individuality in order to buttress nation, religion, ethnicity, family, and gender.

Now it may seem that this phrase, the student's experience of curriculum, places Pinar's inquiry within the field of psychology, but his project did not share psychology's goal of identifying causes of human behavior and feeling. Instead, he was working to bring subjectivity into the discussions of curriculum. I realize that this word, subjectivity, jettisons us into yet another field, that of philosophy, and here again I need to draw the distinction between it

and *currere*. Existential and phenomenological philosophies informed Bill's approach, but those discourses worked to clarify the general meanings of subjectivity in relation to objectivity, epistemology, and relations with others: topics that informed *currere*, but did not constitute it.

Subjectivity shows up in *currere*, visible as an expressed presence of a student or teacher to the world and to the curriculum. I have entitled this essay "The Politics of Presence" because it is the expression of subjectivity as a response to curriculum that has distinguished Bill Pinar's work from much of the scholarship of the 1970s and 1980s that addressed subjectivity in teaching and in identity politics. Hans Gumbrecht, a historian who hopes to reclaim presence for epistemology and pedagogy, points out that

the word presence does not refer (at least does not mainly refer) to a temporal but to a spatial relationship to the world and its objects. Something that is "present" is supposed to be tangible for human hands, which implies that, conversely, it can have an immediate impact on human bodies.

(2004, p. xiii)

The politics of presence share your space; they are, as they say, in your face. It is ironic that we were asked to announce our attendance in school, declaring "present" when it was absence that was required of us.

But politics literally does take place. Embodied, declared, asserted, opinion is political when it impinges on the choices we make in the space we share with others. Curriculum is, and I argue should be, always contested as citizens struggle over what matters, what is worthy of their children's attention and effort. It is always political. Nevertheless, its actors are often anonymous, hidden under the cover of legislative policy, school boards, and generalizations about teachers, students, administrators, and parents that rarely represent the thoughts and feelings of those citizens. The politics of education require us to be present, known, and named.

In his early writings about *currere*, Bill distinguished his project from politics, eschewing its conflation with the neo-Marxist analysis of schooling that interpreted education as a reproduction of the means and methods of corporate industry. When those who claimed the political as their theoretical stance claimed that any reference to subjectivity was merely bourgeois individualism, a form of romantic fantasy that undermined the collective action that would be required to reform society, he argued that the neo-Marxist insistence on solidarity not only narrowed the intellectual work of the field, but it also demanded a deadening conformity. In a beautiful essay in *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, "Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Brown," Bill evoked Virginia Woolf's essay of that title to argue that we cannot reduce human experience to epiphenomena of economy, of social class, or culture. Never denying their influence, he directs our attention to the sense that the student makes of her educational experience, reminding us that the word *individual* is one more

abstraction unless it is embodied in the specificity of one person's biographic situation. Nevertheless, for some time the field of curriculum theory was split between the "critical theorists" applying concepts of reproduction and then resistance and the humanists insisting on the acknowledged presence of each of us in the shared experiences of education and schooling. In "The Unaddressed 'I' of Ideology Critique" (2011), Bill brilliantly revisits critical theory in education explaining how its denial of their own subjectivities served to exaggerate and reify the interests its proponents claimed to repudiate.

Admittedly this description of curriculum theory's early conflicts describes a contest for dominance and persuasion: politics as the practice of power. It is the kind of politics with which, sadly, we are most familiar, particularly in this era of unprincipled party rhetoric and obstructionism. To be present in this contest is to be a bully or a follower, or a drop out. Rather than chart a fractious history, I would like to consider politics from the perspective of Hannah Arendt (1958), who recognized disclosure, speech in the presence of others, as necessary to any action taken in the public sphere. It is in public, she argued, that we are present to each other, and in discourse with each other that we achieve the individuality that expresses who—not what—we are. She understood disclosure to be the very basis of community, again, not a coordinated group of subordinates, but of people who engaged with each other, who often disagreed and discovered their own ideas in the process of that discourse. Her citizens and their community were always dynamic, influenced and influencing each other. If democracy has anything to do with education it is this, albeit ideal, open exchange of opinion. Swamped in the neoliberal discourses of education, we struggle to speak to each other, to students and teachers, about what matters to us. It is only when we draw our language for what matters to us from the lexicon of our own situations, concerns, and imaginations that our conversations about curriculum can come alive. I am not nominating a claustrophobic discourse of private confessions, but I am arguing for the humanities' traditions of history and literature, and some philosophies, that acknowledge that we live in a world of meanings that we have constructed, ideas and relationships that are sustained, questioned and transformed by our own thoughts, actions, and relationships with others.

Writing about Pinar's early work, it is tempting to draw it all back to its roots in *currere*, and even though I hope to avoid this reduction (and the narcissism of seeing the work that I shared with him as determining his scholarly *oeuvres*), I do detect links between the "complicated conversation" that he has called for in *What Is Curriculum Theory* (2011b) and other works, to these early assertions of presence. In *The Character of Curriculum Studies* (2011a), he describes this conversation as "simultaneously personal and public" (1) and also speaks of the relationship of the early work in contemporary writings:

Recently, I have refocused autobiography from self-study to self-expressivity through academic knowledge directed to, informed by, the

world. The world was always the source of live experience, but early on I underemphasized the world in order to articulate the singularity and specificity of lived experience. I positioned the world as “ground” and the individual as “figure” in part as a tactic against the conflation of two, against narcissism and conformity. Cultivating such noncoincidence can support the cultivation of virtue, key to a self-conscious and chosen commitment to others.

(p. xiii)

Informed by Sartre’s (1963), rejection of any form of human objectification, the “I” in Bill’s sense of *currere* was always in process. He made certain to unsettle a static and declarative self by initially adapting Sartre’s temporal process presented in *Search for a Method* (1963) that required glimpses of subjectivity in writings that addressed past, present, and future interests. The temporal manifold that phenomenology offered to acknowledge shifts in perception, perspective, and situation in time was gathered into phases of *currere* that Bill practiced and encouraged: the regressive, progressive, analytical, and synthetical (1976, p. 61.) In my own approach to *currere* with students, I would ask the students to write about their educational experience related to a particular concept, significant to the course that we were studying. But I too always asked for three separate narratives to honor the complexity of their experience, its associations, memories, and moods—and to refuse the single statement that could be conflated with identity.

It is important to emphasize the plurality of subjectivities that *currere* solicited, because in the 1980s and 1990s, narrative flourished in educational inquiry. The cultural revolution of the 1960s had generated disdain for institutional authority as early efforts to advance racial and gender equality strained to hear the voices that hegemony had silenced. This was the era that ushered in social history, narrative inquiry and ethnography: qualitative research methods that flourished in the decades to follow. What distinguished *currere* from the narratives of teaching elicited in narrative inquiry was its deliberate and disciplined avoidance of reification. Bill had no interest in helping people to discover “their teaching selves” or their guiding metaphors. The projects to support teachers’ voices, aimed at increasing their presence in the politics of schooling too often made narratives into icons of identity. *Currere* also abstained from the erasure that saturated ethnography’s adhesion to the modesty of the participant observer of anthropology. Even when the perspective of the ethnographic researcher crept back into the scene in the guise of “positionality,” a confession of one’s racial, gender, and social class identifications, the researcher’s experience was rarely addressed with the specificity that would capture educational experience, so preoccupied was it with these categories of stratification and race and ethnicity.

*Currere*’s commitments to the fluidity and provisional status of self-accounts has influenced my own approach to curriculum research. In

“Finding Form for Curriculum Research” (2008, p. 137), I suggested that dissertations in curriculum theory address these three strands of curriculum, sustaining them in conversation with each other throughout the thesis.

First, *the study of the curriculum phenomenon as a cultural object*. This means that the topic, whether it is whole language literacy, arts integration, or hands-on science, is recognized as a cultural object with a social history anchored in ideology and nested in layers of meaning that call for clarification and interpretation.

Second, *the study of the curriculum object as an event*. This means that curriculum happens, in schools, every day. It is a transaction that takes place among teachers and students, administrators and school boards, legislators, and federal and state agencies. This is a strand of ethnographic research that strives to grasp the lived experience and meaning of curriculum to these actors.

Third, *the study of curriculum in the perspective of the researcher*. This means that the consciousness of any scholar who has been schooled is itself saturated and shaped by curriculum. Curriculum inquiry requires a recapitulation of the researcher’s own history of experience and associations with the object to be studied.

In celebrating the presence that is evoked in *currere*, I am also appreciating its materialism, for through this process, interest appreciates. In *currere*, Bill invited us to address our education in sensuous memories, fleeting associations, fantasies of the future. In his own essays, he wrote a path between how and where he was living, his situation and the philosophies and theories and novels that interested him. In essays evocative of what literary theory was to later term reader response theory, he so situated his responses to Virginia Woolf’s novel, *The Voyage Out*, and Sartre’s *Search for a Method*, for he recognized that the materialism of our daily lives, our habits, frustrations, hungers pulse through our educational experience. For curriculum is not a graduated series of abstractions. It is not just a field of activity that we engage, or a process that we undergo; it is a question that we ask of the world. Merleau-Ponty (1962) told us the world is the answer to the body’s question. The questions that *currere* generates share the embodied, sensuous, interests that Merleau-Ponty invokes, but because curriculum codes what matters to us in representational systems—academic disciplines, in texts and tests—too often it is difficult to find or remember our questions, let alone the world that rises to answer it.

And that is why it is so important to address curriculum as someone, who is somewhere. One phase of *currere* involves narrative, a story, that like our lives, is contained with spatial and temporal limits. A story takes place. It begins and ends. And even if those beginnings and endings are fictions, as Sartre argued in *The Words* (1981), they frame the moments we remember. In *Currere*, A Case Study, published in George Willis’ collection, *Qualitative Evaluation* (1978), Bill reads Sartre’s *Search for a Method*, and records his responses. He is twenty-six, living among people who have repudiated intellectual work, who work as waitresses, and painters. His work is curriculum

theory. He worries that he gives himself over to Sartre's text and worries that his friends live more intensely, less lost in thought. He selects sections of *Search for a Method* where Sartre struggles with Marxism, drawn to the material immediacy of its project, yet ever seeking the freedom that is not determined by it. This is my condensed summary. Bill's writing goes back and forth, between Sartre's text and his responses and narrative, always moving between these two planes and then reflecting upon what he has written, that constitutes yet another dimension.

Consider the fullness of this work, the willingness to feel its emotions and to tolerate its conflicts and tentative conclusions as merely provisional. This is the intensity that Hans Gumbrecht seeks in his study, *The Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey*. Written in 2004, this text conveys the conviction of Gumbrecht and his colleagues that we are lost in thought, preoccupied with interpretations and signification and oblivious to lived experience. In his text, he discusses the phenomenological concept of *Erleben* (lived experience), moments of compelling intensity, that go beyond pure perception because they are followed by experience (*Erfahrung*) as "the result of acts of world interpretation" (p. 100). Gumbrecht points out that *ex-*, the prefix of the English word *experience*, indicates a former state; *peri-* comes from *perimeter*, meaning "around" or "enclosing." Experience carries us beyond ourselves. But the German splitting of experience into two words—*erleben* and *erfahrung*—acknowledges the tension between where we are and where we are going. (yourdailygerman.wordpress.com. Oct.13, 2013 Word of the day—*die erfahrung*.) I turn to this language analysis to point to this tension in *currere*, a process that calls us to feel and name the sensuous place we live, green limbs of the Carolina trees reaching my windows, and the horizon of interests and knowledge that is my window frame. Situated thus, between here and there, now and then, anguish and maybe, we may bring our humanity, particular in every moment we breathe, to our work as scholars and as teachers.

*Currere*, the experience of running the course, was a method and a metaphor. The presence that it invited has been both welcome and daunting. As we write to the community of scholars, we eschew anonymity. "One knows" becomes replaced with "I think" and "I feel." With courage, William Pinar has made himself present in work that addressed race and gender, the status of the academic disciplines, the importance of place, the internationalization of curriculum—all the themes that are discussed in this volume. And just as his students have met his presence and interest with their own concerns and expressivity, his colleagues here and abroad have responded as well. For rather than building autobiographical method as a retreat, Bill dedicated time and effort and money, patience and anxiety, to providing the fora that would welcome and sustain the work of others. The conferences at Airlie and Bergamo, *The Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, the American and International Associations for the Advancement for Curriculum Studies have generated academic discourse that is intense and lively and scholarly.

Vivid, and tentative, insistent and questioning, *currere* invites us to respond to critical moments of our shared world with the words of Abraham in the Old Testament: “*Hineni*”—Here I am.

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# 11 William F. Pinar

## Reflections on a Public Intellectual

*Petra Munro Hendry*

The state of society is one in which the members have suffered amputation from the trunk and strut about like so many walking monsters—a good finger, a neck, a stomach, an elbow, but never a man.

Ralph Waldo Emerson (1837)

Over 150 years ago, Ralph Waldo Emerson considered the meaning and function of the intellectual in his address “The American Scholar,” delivered at Cambridge before the Harvard Chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa Society. Emerson lamented over the loss of the public intellectual suggesting that men had been reduced to “walking monsters”—like Frankenstein—made up of parts so distributed to multitudes, so minutely subdivided, spilled into drops they could no longer be gathered as “One Man.” Emerson disparaged that scholars had been so fragmented, divided—in essence amputated—that the scholar was no longer an intellect, but had become a “mere thinker, or worse, the parrot of other men’s thinking.” For Emerson, the scholar, or what I will call the public intellectual, while enriched by the past, was not to be bound by books. His most important activity is action. Inaction is cowardice. Emerson’s intellectual preserves great ideas of the past, communicates them, and creates new ideas. And he communicates his ideas to the world, not just to fellow intellectuals. He is the “world’s eye.” Finally, Emerson’s intellectual does all of these things not out of obligation to his society, but out of obligation to himself. The responsibility of the intellectual is not to change society; change assumes an outside perspective and this necessitates separation from the world. Instead, the responsibility of the public intellectual is first and foremost to the study of the self as it is constituted in and of the world. Fulfilling this responsibility is the public service of education that is rendered visible through the scholarship of W. F. Pinar.

As Pinar reminds us, “interiority is always of and in the world” (2009, p. 3). So while much of the curriculum theorizing of Pinar has focused on text (deconstruction, understanding, reading the world, hermeneutics), I turn my attention to Pinar’s action, to the praxis and responsibility of being a public intellectual through study (*currere*), creativity (*cosmopolitanism*), and living in

the “not-yet” (*complicated conversation*). While never calling himself a public intellectual (he uses the term *teacher* to describe himself), much of his scholarship has focused on the lives of public intellectuals like Dwayne Huebner (Pinar, 2009), Maxine Greene (Pinar, 1998), Ted Aoki (Pinar & Irwin, 2005), Jane Addams (Pinar, 2009), Laura Bragg (Pinar, 2009), and Pier Paolo Pasolini (Pinar, 2009). While living vastly different lives, these intellectuals share in common a commitment to action in the world through subjective understanding. Pinar’s engagement with subjectivity is not only a form of public service, but creates the public as a sphere in which teachers as public intellectuals have as their primary obligation and responsibility to take on Emerson’s “monster.”

### **Currere: The Study of Subjectivity**

Through self-reflexive academic study subjectivity becomes reconstructed as social democracy. Private passion becomes public service.

William Pinar (2012, p. 2)

For Pinar (2005), “study” is critical to the cultivation of deep democracy. Study is not to be confused with teaching or learning. Study, as Pinar suggests, “has come to connote only test preparation, not self-cultivation or social democratization” (2012, p. 44). As Pinar has maintained consistently throughout his scholarship, it is not learning, teaching, or knowledge that is the heart of education, but study. In fact, learning “limits study to what is taught, it performs the dirty work of accountability, that cover for the closure of academic-intellectual-freedom in contemporary classrooms” (Pinar, 2006, p. 116). Learning is a postulated concept. Study, on the other hand, enables “understanding” (Pinar, 2006, p. 111). Study is the action or praxis of the public intellectual through reading, writing, and conversation. Perhaps most importantly, study is, as William Doll (1993) suggests, recursion—the re-reading, the re-writing (editing), and conversing again and again. It is recognizing that we do not learn, nor do we teach. All that we can do is study. And this is enough.

Study “acknowledges academic knowledge as important *for its own sake*, even as it also encourages the articulations of its educational significance” (Pinar, 2012, p. 51, italics added for emphasis). Study requires an immersion in text, wide-ranging texts across time, place, and discipline, in order to dislodge the present moment as a means to gain perspective on it. Study requires that we step out of ourselves through entering the past and imagining the future. Study requires us to generate questions, take standpoints (even though temporary), ask “What if?” and imagine ourselves in the lives of others, all of which are central to the agency and understanding of subjectivity. The purpose of study is to understand the subjective self, “to understand how culture and history have become particularized in the specificity of

the subjectivity within which I dwell and from which I work” (Pinar, 2012, p. 46). This regressive and progressive movement brought into conversation to analyze the present moment comprises the framework of *currere* through which, in the synthetic moment, “self-study becomes reconstructed as public service” (Pinar, 2012, p. 47). Study is democracy.

Writing is the primary way that I study. When I am asked what I do for a living, I am often tempted to say that I am a writer. This would not be a lie since I do spend the majority of my day writing. So why am I reluctant to name myself a writer? In my mind, writers write for large audiences and sell lots of books. They are on the *New York Times* Best Seller List, get nominated for Pulitzer prizes and get invited to speak on *Good Morning America* or National Public Radio (NPR). The academic books I write will never approach such acclaim. This does not really bother me (although I do often fantasize about how I would answer Terry Gross if she were to ask “Tell me about your writing process?”). I understand that the focus of my writing is in fact quite narrow and intended for a very specific audience. However small that audience is, I still take my writing very seriously. Writing is not about production (much like education is not about production); it is about the process of constructing a life that is fully human. To understand who we are as human beings in relation to the self and others is our primary responsibility as writers who are deeply committed to education as a process of study. Understanding the relationship between our humanity and education through study (writing) is the work that William Pinar has engaged throughout the course of his life as a public intellectual.

Through writing as study, subjectivity becomes reconstructed. For Pinar, this study of the self through *currere* (or autobiography) is the praxis or action of the public intellectual. On the other hand, learning and teaching are passive acts. They require transmission or exchange. In other words, they are forms of reproduction. Study, particularly as writing through *currere*, acknowledges our responsibility to engage in the action of subjectification. Writing as study is the active agency or creative act of subjectivity. This act of creation, “of bringing something new into the world” (Biesta, 2014, p. 12), is the intellectual work of subjectivity. For Pinar, subjectivity is always in the making. Subjectivity is not an essence waiting to be drawn out or something that we can possess, but rather “something that can be realized, from time to time, in always new, open, and unpredictable situations of encounter” (Biesta, 2014, p. 12). For Pinar, we do not come to “know” the self. Instead the creation of subjectivity is an ethical obligation, a form of public service, the work of the public intellectual. Writing (and reading) as study is an ethical (not an epistemological or ontological) responsibility. Pinar maintains, like Allan Block (2004), that “study, like prayer, is a way of being—it is an ethics” (p. 2). Study, as our ethical responsibility to create, to encounter subjectivity, what makes us human, through being in and of the world, is the heart of education. This responsibility to write is a central thread that I see woven

throughout the scholarship of William Pinar. Like Emerson, the commitment of the public intellectual is to action. For Pinar, this active ethical responsibility is the study of the self in and of the world through *currere*.

### Cosmopolitanism: “The Invention of New Souls”

Beware, my body and my soul, beware above all of crossing your arms and assuming the sterile attitude of the spectator, for life is not a spectacle, a sea of griefs is not a proscenium, and a man who wails is not a dancing bear.

Aimé Césaire, *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*, 2001

To change the world is to live in it with open arms, to embrace both stranger and friend, risk and possibility, as well as love and fear. This understanding of cosmopolitanism is “rooted” in local, embodied, and subjective experience, while recognizing that these are always of the world. We are in and of the world, dwelling, lingering, and with a responsibility to engage our humanity. Césaire reminds us in his epic poem that the work of the public intellectual requires not only a focus on the political, in other words relations of power, but also on the spiritual and aesthetic. A “man who wails” or screams is a spectator; the “dancing bear” evokes the poetic, the inevitable movement between worlds. The dancing bear evokes strength, power, wisdom, and simultaneously a sense of movement, openness, and play.

To be a cosmopolitan public intellectual requires a fierce understanding of one’s own family and community, while simultaneously embracing a disposition of vulnerability to the stranger. The dance of the bear is the flow of movement between the local and the cosmos through which our subjectivities are continually reinvented as “citizens of the world” (Appiah, 2006). In its original Greek derivation, Kwame Appiah (2006) reminds us that the use of the word *world* did not signify the earth or globe but meant universe or cosmos. The concept of cosmopolitanism, rather than globalization or internationalization, takes into account the vast constellation of the known and the unknown. The life of the public intellectual is not about being a spectator, but is an active engagement of “being” in the world, of always engaging in the dance of subjectivity.

In a similar vein, Pinar (2009) acknowledges that the focus on the political and institutional nature of cosmopolitanism has been done at the cost of exclusion of gendered terms, racial terms, and “rarely in terms of subjectivity” (p. 3). By subjectivity, Pinar means

the inner life, the lived sense of ‘self’—however non-unitary, dispersed, fragmented—that is associated with what has been given and what one has chosen, those circumstances of everyday life, those residues of trauma and of fantasy, from which one reconstructs a life.

(p. 3)

It is acknowledgment of this everydayness, the ongoing work of subjectivity and self-understanding that does not allow Pinar to “cross his arms” and adopt the “sterile attitude of the spectator.” Cosmopolitanism as “subjectively being-in-the-world” complicates the self and its narration as it challenges—even changes—the world. Pinar (2009) writes:

A cosmopolitan curriculum juxtaposes the abstract and the concrete, the collective and the individual, history and biography, politics and art, public service and private passion. Such a curriculum provides passages between the subjective and the social and, in so doing, engenders that worldliness a cosmopolitan education invites.

(p. i)

This engagement (or praxis) of cosmopolitanism, of becoming a citizen of the cosmos, cannot be legislated or prescribed through laws or organizations (NGO or otherwise). Cosmopolitanism as a way of life requires something apart from the law. The law cannot dictate compassion, sociability, or hospitality (Quinn, 2010). Hospitality, the heart of cosmopolitanism, is an ethics of responsibility that acknowledges our inter-being as home place across time and space.

We do not necessarily have to travel or even leave home to engage in a cosmopolitan ethics. Being hospitable is the responsibility of everyday life. The construction of my life as a writer has much to do with the hospitality of William Pinar through the mentorship he has provided me over the past twenty-five years. It was not long after I arrived at Louisiana State University in 1991 that William Pinar offered to be my academic mentor. We met once every semester over lunch, often at his favorite restaurant, Juban's. After catching up on the latest “gossip,” our conversation would turn to our intellectual work, what we had been reading and what we had been writing. Often, Bill would have asked me to share some of my current writing or I might have asked him to read something that I was currently working on. As a young scholar, the interest in my work by a senior scholar was essential to my understanding of scholarly engagement as a *communal* and cosmopolitan endeavor, not a solitary one. The process in which we engaged was not only about whether I was on track for tenure but also about ideas and if these ideas mattered, how I had arrived at them, and why they were important to the field of curriculum theory. These lunches were cosmopolitan spaces in which subjectivity/souls could be invented and renewed. The public intellectual engages in movement, opens one's arms, and offers hospitality.

## Complicated Conversations

The educational point of the public school curriculum is *understanding*, understanding the relations among academic knowledge, the state of society, processes of self-formation, and the character of the historical moment in which we live,

in which others have lived, and in which our descendants will someday live. It is *understanding* that informs the ethical obligations to care for ourselves and our fellow human beings, that enables us to think and act with intelligence, sensitivity, and courage in both the public sphere—as citizens aspiring to establish a democratic society—and in the private sphere, as individuals committed to other individuals.

Pinar (2012, p. 190)

*Understanding* is a process that William Pinar acknowledges occurs in relationships, both public and private: spheres that are deeply interconnected. The ongoing dialogue between the public and the private, the social and the subjective that comprises the heart of *understanding* is embodied in complicated conversation. The concept of conversation, from my point of view, seeks to disrupt normative binary thinking by engaging in weaving relationships across time, space, and place. As Pinar suggests, this is an ethical obligation, not an entirely epistemological one. The “ethical obligation to care for ourselves and our fellow human beings” is a form of curriculum theorizing in which:

curriculum is not comprised of subjects, but of Subjects, of subjectivity. The running of the course is the building of the self, the lived experience of subjectivity. Autobiography is an architecture of the self, a self we create and embody as we read, write, speak and listen.

(Pinar, 1994, p. 220)

This “architecture of the self” is of course not the bourgeois, individual “autonomous” self of modernist thought, but as Janet Miller (2005) notes, the self is always “autobiography in-the-making.”

By understanding curriculum as complicated conversation, the curriculum field is called to understand, not control. To understand what has made possible and impossible the present moment in order to imagine what is “not yet.” It is the suspension of temporality that can complicate past, present, and future as a means of threading conversation across space. History without time is what makes possible a complicated conversation. As a form of ethics, there is a responsibility to participate in conversation. For me, writing is this complicated conversation.

Writing is a complicated conversation. It is a conversation that begins with the self. It is a conversation in which the imagined, the felt, the desired, the nightmares become embodied, made flesh in the word. Writing becomes a sacred act, a ritual that symbolizes the process of becoming. My conversations with Bill often focused on our writing process. How our day was structured around writing, when we took a break from writing, how we struggled to keep our commitments to writing time. My commitment to writing, my discipline in writing every day, is intimately linked to the sage

advice over the years to “stay out of the office, stay home and write.” Like Bill, I like to write at home. In my study, surrounded by my books, looking out my window, I am in my own world, a space in which I can detach from the “nightmare” of education that is, in order to re-imagine what might be. It is writing that is my refuge, my place of sanity and my space for intellectual work. It is where I engage in ideas, try them out, see how they look, feel, and come alive. Perhaps this is why writing takes so long. It takes time to play with, clarify, think through ideas. This is the complicated conversation, the re-writing, re-reading, re-writing process in which I must clarify what it is that I want to say at this particular moment. To do so with integrity, and honesty is my responsibility as part of the complicated conversation.

When I sit down to write in the morning, I envision a conversation: there is an audience to whom I am speaking. It might be a group of fellow academics, the local community, or a national/international audience, but I am engaging in a dialogue in which I anticipate a listener, a potential conversation. I listen to hear what the response might be. I hope my writing will spark dialogue, controversy, discomfort as well as understanding, trust, and imagination. The words I write are not meant to re-present but to re-imagine. Much like the work of Maxine Greene, which has been so central to Pinar (1998), it is imagination, not knowledge, which inspires the life of the public intellectual as both a writer and an educator. Writing allows one to imagine like Maxine Greene “who I am not yet” (Pinar, 1998, p. 1). A sense of incompleteness, “of what is not yet but can be, inspires us to work for a future we can only imagine now” (Pinar, 1998, p. 1). I maintain that the work of public intellectuals like Maxine Greene and William Pinar is to engage us in the complicated conversation of what is “not yet.” Our responsibility as scholars in the academy, as educators who write to engage in/with the “public sphere,” is to engage in the dialogue of what is “not yet.”

Much like Maxine Greene, Pinar has been a public intellectual and continues to be so in spite of the ongoing de-intellectualization of the academy, specifically the field of education. Engaging with ideas—the work of scholarship—is no longer seen as a legitimate pursuit, unless it can be measured, made into a commodity, or sold in the global marketplace. The “public” sphere, much like Christopher Lasch (1978) anticipated decades ago, has become a problematic space, a space no longer trusted. This reduction of the public sphere that is essential to the very concept of a complicated conversation threatens to limit conversation to sound bytes, to thirty-character texts, to infomercials in which there is “exchange” of words, but no real dialogue.

In many ways, it is through my writing that I engage in dialogue, in which I imagine the “complicated conversation,” that is, that will be, that has been. Pinar (2004) describes a complicated conversation as a

conversation in which interlocutors are speaking not only among themselves but to those not present, not only to historical figures and unnamed peoples and places they may be studying, but to politicians

and parents dead and alive, not to mention to the selves they have been, are in the process of becoming, and someday may become.

(p. 43)

When I write, I am conversing with colleagues, strangers, and friends across time and space. The private conversations I have with myself at the computer as I write are also simultaneously the public conversations that I will have. Through writing I can contemplate, articulate, play with, and take up ideas in ways that are not possible through “public” dialogue. Clearly public discourse is essential to democracy. However, what Pinar has made clear is that this is not possible without preparation through study: reading and writing that constitutes the subjective self through complicated conversation. As Pinar (2012) reminds us, a complicated conversation serves as a “conversation with oneself [as a ‘private person’] and with others threaded through academic knowledge, an ongoing project of self-understanding in which one becomes mobilized for engagement in the world” (p. 47). In a time when subjectivity has been reduced to a “selfie,” a mere reflection of a reflection, the reconstitution of the self as a “complicated conversation” that requires introspection, contemplation, reading and writing is more critical than ever to encouraging the social self that is the heart of a democratic society.

### **Study, Democracy, and the Public Intellectual**

I suggest that to interpret the world *is* to change it.

Pinar (2009, p. 3)

Contemporary curriculum theorists lament the de-intellectualization of the field of curriculum; they also maintain that American culture is inherently anti-intellectual (Hofstadter, 1962). One might, like Emerson, concede that the concept of the public intellectual is almost a memory, relegated to some nostalgic, lost past. Are we now inhabited by the “walking dead,” monsters upon monsters, severed, fragmented, and frightened? Given Emerson’s romantic, transcendentalist persuasion, this reading might make sense. Emerson was deeply invested in the “public intellectual.” To be a public intellectual though requires not objectification or knowledge, but the ongoing praxis of becoming a subject in and of the world. The role of the public intellectual is not to reproduce (knowledge, ideas, or works) or to represent, but to interpret the world through creating encounters of responsibility to study: to invent and be in the not-yet.

I am drawn to the concept of the public intellectual (rather than concepts like scholar, teacher, social activist, or cultural worker) because it provides a through-line, a passage between the solitary work of study and the very public work and action of speaking and writing. The term allows me to



subvert the binaries of private/public, subjective/objective, teacher/student. The aim of education is to become fully human through engaging in the life of a public intellectual. It is time to reclaim education as a form of public intellectualism.

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## 12 *Maple Jazz*

### An Artist's Rendering of *Currere*

*Rita L. Irwin*



*Figure 12.1 Maple Jazz by Rita Irwin (2003, acrylic painting)*

The above painting hangs in the entrance to Bill Pinar's home. For me, it metaphorically represents, and metonymically stands for, *currere*. It reaches into my experiences as an artist, scholar and educator and allows me to interpret and reinterpret, to imagine and reimagine, and to reflect and deflect what I am coming to understand. Pinar's work on *currere* has deeply influenced how I think about learning, curriculum studies and art. Indeed, his reconceptualizing of curriculum studies lead the way for me to understand my own artistic and educational practices differently. *Currere* freed me to see the movement in learning, to feel the rhythm of my body within learning moments, to perceive my often ignored senses, and to visualize what lies

beyond the easily recognized. The title of the above painting is *Maple Jazz*. While I often leave paintings untitled, this painting seemed to reach into my experience and rhythmically moved me to understand my experience of the maple trees in a liminal space, a blurred space, an improvised space (Barrett, 2000). A space that is, and is not, a particular thing. A space that starts somewhere and moves to another space.

Pinar (1994, 2004) and Grumet and Pinar (1976), showed us that curriculum, perhaps commonly understood as a course of study, is derived from the Latin word *currere*, meaning to run the course. While curriculum has often been viewed as text based, *currere* is active and contextual. The difference between the two is profound. Through *currere*, actions teach individuals to attend to their educational experiences.

*Currere* does not constitute a reflective retreat from the world, but a heightened engagement with it. As a research methodology, *currere* has employed literature as a foil for the reflection of the investigator. As a reader, the research recreates what the writer has created, and in so doing, creates another world, drawn both from the substance of his or her experience and fantasy and from the literature itself. This conscious and explicit participation in aesthetic experience—it becomes like archeology—illustrates the reciprocity of objectivity and subjectivity in the student's and teacher's experience of the curriculum. It extends the artist's awareness that subjectivity transforms the objectivity it seeks to describe.

(Pinar et al., 1995, p. 415)

Though not all educators may want to pursue *currere* as a research methodology, used as a conceptual frame, it serves to shift one's focus solely away from text to include an individual's experience and the influence of the social milieu on that experience. For me, the impact on my aesthetic life is heightened engagement. It also calls for playfulness with language itself. Through an etymological search, I learned that excursion means *excurrere* in Latin, meaning to run outward. Excursions are directed actions, moving outward, and reaching beyond. Alternatively, incursion means *incurrere* in Latin, meaning to run inward. Excursions are liberating, while incursions are perhaps invasive. Curriculum, excursions, incursions: course of study; moving outward, moving inward. *Currere*, *excurrere*, *incurrere*: running the course, running beyond the course, running into and against the course.

Implicit within *currere* is the notion of running forward. Curriculum is and needs to be a course of action that advances understanding. Excursions are like field trips seeking understanding beyond the original course of action, often circling back before venturing outward again. Incursions are like interventions, disrupting what may have been taken for granted, effectively stopping the original course of action forcing it into retreat. Curriculum as a way of understanding learning, or understanding the conditions for learning, needs a strong sense of *currere*. In an era when personalized learning (e.g.,

Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Province of British Columbia, 2013) and transformational learning (e.g., Swanson 2010) are highlighted yet questioned, we need to continue reimagining *currere*. This is where *recurrere* is essential. We need to return to *currere* over and over again, through excursions and incursions, to continue reimagining *currere* in our contemporary times.

To explore these ideas, I wish to narrate my experiences with these notions of *excurrere* and *incurrere* by describing my experiences with the maples.

### **An Excursion into the Maples**

Walking intently across campus to a previously scheduled meeting takes me into the world beyond my office, our classrooms and the busyness of our hallways.<sup>1</sup> It's a welcome relief to the revolving door of activity streaming through my office. I look forward to this walk. It gives me a chance to breathe in fresh air, to clear my mind, to refocus, to walk in silence. Today the crisp autumn air licks at my cheeks. I feel the crunching of dried leaves underfoot. The sounds rise to sharp echoes bouncing off the research labs nearby. I am mesmerized by the bounty of colour lying beneath my feet. Walking with a bounce in my step, I realize I am vicariously witnessing moments of human activity in research labs and classrooms.

Turning a corner, I am surprised and captivated by an amazing spectacle. The pure cloudless turquoise sky warms the air with its brightness. A majestic grove of maple trees with brilliant red leaves dancing against this backlit stage fills the boulevard in front of me. Luckily I have my camera with me. I walk amongst the trees peering up into the sky, looking for the compositions that excite my senses. I am filled with expectation. There is such magic in the air. For several months, the photographs I took of the maples hung on my studio wall. I was enthralled with their visual compositions, but more than that, they prompted a rush of feelings and memories from that particular fall day. My body remembered the chill in the air, the crook in my neck as I peered upward, and the thrill of excitement racing through my veins. During this time period, I painted many images each starting from a photograph, but soon moving beyond into new images. Through these visual explorations, I portrayed the qualities of experience I felt and imagined that day, and the days following. The images were evocative, sacred, sublime, beautiful, relational, spiritual and emotional. Each image holds different meanings for me though they represent the same day and time period. Each is an excursion into heightened engagement. Each image teaches me something fresh and alive through every new encounter.

### **An Incursion into the Maples**

Walking into my studio, I am struck by remnants and markings of previous paintings. Long strips of masking tape temporarily hang in repetitive patterns on the three 'painting walls,' drippings of paint mark the plastic floor covering, and occasional brush marks linger at the edges of where canvas or paper

once lived: fragments of time and fragments of experience converging into this tiny space given to creativity. Whenever I walk into this space, I become acutely aware of my need to create, my need to care for the urge to create. Though my perceptual skills are often attuned to the nuances of life around me, there are times I need the attention that comes from the act of painting. I walk into the studio, and I walk into a painting. Applying paint to paper, no matter how planned it may be, is never an act of artistic domination over materials. I am in constant conversation. Sometimes I leave the studio feeling the rush of intimacy with a loved one and sometimes I leave with feelings of inadequacy knowing the silent argument I am leaving behind. And though a few days may pass before my next return, I am always aware of this creative yet sometimes subversive space in my home.<sup>2</sup>



Figure 12.2 *Metonymic Forest* by Rita Irwin (2003, acrylic painting)

*Maple Jazz* is spontaneous, unfinished, improvisational, active, tonal, mesmerizing, and subversive. *Metonymic Forest* (Figure 12.2) takes the masking tape strips that once framed the paper in which the paintings were painted, and juxtaposes them to stand for the experience in a very different way. The original images now have white borders where the tape once masked the paper. The white borders metonymically stand for all the spaces existing beyond the image. However, the removed masking tape also stands for all that exists beyond, this time with a sense of intervention. After all, what constitutes a painting? How do we understand landscape? How do the ideas of beauty, meaning, evocation and provocation come into play in this space? And perhaps most of all, how does this work move *currere*, and in this instance, *incurrere*?

### A Return to Currere: A Recursive Inquiry

My experiences as a curriculum scholar, artist and educator exists in the liminal spaces between and amidst theory and practice, presence, and absence, personal and professional. In my exploration of these and other liminal spaces, a/r/tography has become my methodology of choice. As an artist/researcher/educator, art making and writing offer complementary yet questioning forms of recursive inquiry. *Recurrere* or recursion means running back to the course, a returning from excursions and incursions to *currere*. A/r/tography is a fluid orientation creating its rigour through continuous reflexivity, hermeneutic inquiry, and I would suggest, *recurrere*. As an a/r/tographer, I (re)present themes that emerge in my inquiry, my *recurrere*. The themes, though stemming from questions, evoke a range of new understandings rather than answers or findings. The evocative nature of the process(es) and any products created, rely on sensory and analytical interpretations of experience to form understandings of abstract knowledge. The text of each modality and the resulting intertextuality (see de Cosson, 2001), meet in the context of learning, a way of sharing an in-between (third) space residing between knowing and not knowing.

A/r/tography involves metaphor and metonymy (Springgay, Irwin, & Kind, 2005). Metaphors are based on similarity or comparison whereas metonymy is based on contiguity or connectedness. As images or text compare one thing with another, metaphors are employed to help the viewer or reader understand the inherent meanings within phenomenon by taking something we all understand and comparing it to another we may not have understood before. Metonymy on the other hand, stands for an entity closely associated with it rather than relying on comparative features between the two entities. Metaphors and metonyms are tropes used in figurative language to help the reader, viewer or listener envision meaning. Low and Palulis (2000) suggest that curriculum is bounded in metaphorical processes:

As presence, metaphors work to veil the absence; as absence metonymies—the ‘unsaid’—resist disguise. Spaces created in-between

presence and absence invoke chiasmatic faultlines—quaking to-and-fro movements—of uncertainty. We seek the complexities of those in-between spaces of metaphor/metonymy, spaces where teaching becomes a messy text and where, within our daily work as teachers, nervous performativities are constituted between the ‘said’ and the ‘unsaid.’ . . . we continue to heed Aoki’s call for engagement in the pedagogical spaces in-between—in the troubled spaces between metaphor and metonymy. Drawing from Lacanian psychoanalysis, Aoki (1999) re/writes Metonymic moments for pedagogy: “Let us recall the textured form of plannable/unplannable or predictable/unpredictable. These are [M] etonymies. . . . Contexturing this way brings forth the space between, here grappled with a slash: “/”. It is in this space of between that our teachers . . . dwell, likely finding a space of ambiguity, ambivalence, and uncertainty but simultaneously a vibrant site. It looks like a simple oppositional binary space, but it is not. It is a space of doubling, where we slip into the language of “both this and that, but neither this nor that.”

(p. 181)

Pinar’s *currere* and Aoki’s metaphors and metonyms (see Pinar & Irwin, 2005) deeply influenced the unfolding of a/r/tography. Aoki uses the ‘/’ to graphically shift knowing, to mark a space that is neither strictly one thing or another, a space that is full of potentialities (Aoki, 2003). Aoki allowed the ‘/’ space to play with curriculum as planned/curriculum as lived, and created an inspired place for being and becoming. The ‘/’ allowed for an enacted doubling, and for a/r/tography this allowed for a doubling of art and/or graphy, and of artist, researcher, and/or educator, of representation/non-representation discourse. The ‘/’ is important for this article and for *Maple Jazz* and *Metonymic Forest*. Playing with metaphors whilst recognizing metonymic moments of indwelling appreciated/challenged/disrupted the narratives I shared earlier, and begins to portray a living pedagogy, a space of living inquiry. It is a hybrid space, a site of generative possibilities inviting us to live fully, to live with hope, to live in a way that challenges us to live courageously and lovingly.

Returning to *currere*, *recurrere*, I begin to recognize how indwelling with *excurrere/incurrere* is a way to recognize a metonymic moment between Pinar and Aoki. Both have influenced me and yet, I can see moments when each has influenced me more than the other, or not at all. This is the recursive inquiry at the essence of *currere*. *Currere* is an autobiographical genre of curriculum theorizing. People are attracted to autobiographical work because they want to see more of their experiences and to see them more clearly. Many search for a “method of self-exploration that involves careful attention to small psychological events—*points at which desire emerges from the unconscious into awareness*” (Kesson, 2001 p. 83, emphasis in original). *Currere* helps us search for meaning, intimacy, transcendence, and spiritual purpose (Birch, 1999; Garrison, 2001; MacDonald, 1995).

*Currere*, *excurrere*, *incurrere* and *recurrere*, all exist in movement. My excursion into the maples opened up possibilities for aesthetic enjoyment and pleasure. I was attuned to my experience. In my electronic calendar, this experience wasn't named. It wasn't a meeting, class or event. It was ordinary time, that time when days seem to run together without exceptional incident, good or bad, where spaces between events happen unnoticed. Yet it was in this time that heightened engagement happened. In the margins of the day, I found a space for "feelings and intuitions which daily life doesn't have a place for and mostly seems to suppress. . . . With the arts, people can make a space for themselves and fill it with intimations of freedom and presence" (Greene, 1995, p. 129). I walked into poesis. I walked into a painting. I walked into an aesthetic experience, letting it wash over my senses, my questions, my inquiries, while I opened myself to the possibility of new understandings. I freed myself to be in the experience, interpreting the experience in multiple ways.

In "The Daily Practice of Painting," Gerhard Richter states:

Painting is the making of an analogy for something nonvisual and incomprehensible; giving it form and bringing it within reach. And that is why good paintings are incomprehensible. Creating the incomprehensible has absolutely nothing to do with turning out any old bunkum, because bunkum is always comprehensible. 'Not comprehensible' partly means 'not transitory': i.e., essential. And it partly means an analogy for something that, by definition, transcends our understanding, but which our understanding allows us to postulate.

(quoted in Obrist, 2002, p. 99)

For many of Richter's paintings, blurring draws attention to painting as a medium. "Blurring results in a flickering effect, obscures things in a swimmy mist, disturbs the viewer's perception and partially prevents communication" (Batschmann, 1998, p. 34). This effect suspends landscapes somewhere between appearing and disappearing, in an in-between state of appearing and/or not appearing. He goes on to say:

Every beauty that we see in landscape—every enchanting colour effect, or tranquil scene, or powerful atmosphere, every gentle linearity or magnificent spatial depth or whatever—is our projection; and we can switch it off at a moment's notice, to revert only to the appalling horror and ugliness.

(quoted in Obrist, 2002, p. 124)

These passages caught my attention because they helped me understand my own experiences and my painting. The excursion into the Maples happened when I allowed myself to slow down and notice my surroundings. I chose to notice the beauty around me and ignored incursive visual



elements: dumpsters, muddy puddles, walls falling apart. I ignored the reason I was on the walk, that is, walking to a difficult meeting. While in the studio, I switched off my reverence for the walk in nature, and looked outside the representational painting to that which lies outside, the excess, the metonymic spaces between presence/absence. I began to question what constitutes a painting, what is a painting, how does art move us, what is art, what is *curre* through art? What is impossible to share in this article is the process of the experience itself. The experience is, after all, the ‘artwork’ and the ‘work’ of art. It is both and neither. The recursive inquiry, the *recurrere*, nurtured a/r/tography (Irwin, 2004) and created its own form of research methodology.

*Curre* is an autobiographical form of research that is evident in what a/r/tography attempts to perform. Where it may be different is in its commitment to artistic forms of inquiry in addition to educational forms of engagement. Yet, *curre* never dismisses the arts. In fact, Pinar is greatly attuned to the arts. He recognizes Aoki’s attunement to the auditory, especially to the sounds of jazz music improvising curriculum theorizing and practicing. He is attuned to the poetic sounds in complicated conversations (Pinar, 2004, p. 189). And while he may not linger openly with the visual, as he does the auditory and poetic, images are pervasive in his work (dreams, fantasy, propaganda, media, etc.). A/r/tography also encourages networks of artist scholars to be engaged in *curre*, to create living inquiries set alongside one another, implicating one another personally, professionally and politically. It is perhaps here when *excurre* and *incurre* reverberate, in complicated conversations. In and through time, this becomes a recursive space when *curre* is revisited again and again from different perspectives.

### **Maple Jazz Revisited**

*Maple Jazz* is at once a visual, auditory, poetic and narrative prompt evoking and provoking readers, viewers, listeners and performers an opportunity to blur what they think they see, what they think they hear, and what they think they understand, in order to give form to that which is comprehensible/incomprehensible. As soon as we think we understand some ‘thing,’ we must be open to that which we do not understand, and may not ever understand, that which transcends our explanations, and nevertheless, use our expressive abilities to pursue understandings. To live a life of living inquiry is to embrace *curre* through its multidimensional movements of *excurre*, *incurre* and *recurrere*, in the liminal messy spaces between and among our identities, sites of engagement and our networks of co-inquirers. Our attunement to the “jazz of praxis” (Pinar, 2005, p. 82) becomes a complicated conversation of improvisation, an auditory embrace that acknowledges two curriculum scholars who have deeply influenced Canadian curriculum studies. In the presence of maples, we embrace the temporal and spatial enactment of *curre*.

## Notes

- 1 Some of the ideas shared here were part of the following unpublished keynote presentation: *Caring for How We Perceive Curriculum/Leadership*, a keynote lecture for the First World Curriculum Studies Conference, East China Normal University, Shanghai, China, October 27–29, 2003. Pinar was President of this group, and he introduced me to a remarkable international group of curriculum scholars. During that keynote, I shared many more images from the 'Maple Series' and how I reimagined curriculum leadership through my painting practice.
- 2 I also explored the ideas of *excurrere* and *incurrere* for a presentation at the 4th World Chinese Arts Education Symposium. Beijing: People's Fine Art Publishing House (see Irwin, 2013).

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# 13 Generous Interrogations and Affirmations

## Histories and Trajectories

*Janet L. Miller*

... love means an affirmative desire towards the Other—to respect the Other, to pay attention to the Other, not to destroy the otherness of the Other—and this is the preliminary affirmation, even if afterwards because of this love, you ask questions.

Jacques Derrida (2007)

Throughout and continuing in his distinguished career, I have observed Bill Pinar consistently assert the centrality of advancing the intellectual vibrancy of the curriculum field via complicated conversation. He does so in a spirit of affirmation, never revoking “the otherness of the Other,” but always asking questions that such a love generates and animates. Bill urges the field’s participants to never let totalizing assumptions go unchallenged. Concomitantly, he demonstrates the importance of turning matters of great consequence in education into questions that can impel vigorous study that must frame those complicated conversations. Always, Bill works by becoming philosophical in and about his passions, appreciating, I believe, that love in its indefinite openness always returns us to what we do—and do not know (Butler, 2011, 2015).

I confess that this is not an easily detached undertaking—to think as broadly and expansively as we so desire about Bill Pinar as a thinker. It’s impossible to separate my interpretations of Bill as a thinker from the ways and times in which I have deliberated, planned, pondered, wondered, fashioned and improvised *alongside* Bill. My positioning of “alongside” does *not* indicate that we always share each other’s viewpoints and understandings by any means—after all, I’ve been most interested over the years in what juxtaposition might provide in terms of generating possibly unforeseen discernments. Rather, by *alongside*, I mean to suggest that I continuously have Bill in mind—across decades now and always with a sense of anticipation, knowing that he already has tackled, in his latest work, yet another angle on “education as a provocative phenomenon to be understood” (Pinar, 2015a, p. 4). I always know too that Bill has theorized, in incredible depth, myriad aspects of that phenomenon.

Thus, I constantly am moved by Bill's eagerness to engage those questions that his affirmations of curriculum studies impel. I too am inspired by his devotion to complex study in order to engage such questions as means by which to "respect the Other." That intense study and its accompanying affirmations *and* questions can be traced through his initial work to help move the U.S. curriculum field from a solely bureaucratic, instrumental and ameliorative focus on curriculum development to one of curriculum studies, whose intellectual advancement demands "complicated conversation," the character of which is ethical; through his efforts to conceive forms of scholarly research and theorizing that could support educators' endeavors to understand, especially via the autobiographical method of *currere*, our lived experiences of and as curriculum; and through his intense involvement with ongoing processes of internationalization that can frame a cosmopolitan education by attending to particularities of worldly lives that alert us to alterity.

Throughout these and other hugely influential contributions to the academic discipline of curriculum studies, Bill has theorized and demonstrated study as ongoing, in solitude and with others. By positing the simultaneity of solitary and collective study, Bill urges learning and questioning from both self and others as an ongoing ethical engagement with alterity, "with what and whom I don't know, and perhaps cannot understand, at least initially and perhaps never fully" (Pinar, 2015a, p. xii). Thus, I see Bill's formulation of a practice of study as generous interrogation *without* insular or ever fully realized definitions or understandings of self and other—but certainly and at the same time, *with* affirmative respect and attention, so as to never "destroy the otherness" of either the Other or the self.

Throughout and continuing in his resplendent career, then, Bill has committed himself to sustained study of education and its myriad histories, present conditions and possible futures as crucial in the intellectual advancement of curriculum studies, now situated as a worldwide but not analogous field. But more specifically, as part of his affirmation of the *study* of such—as well as to the situated questions that such affirming attention, respect and desire inevitably surface—I believe that Bill consistently performs a notion that he and his doctoral studies' mentor, Paul R. Klover, both lived and advanced; that is, "curriculum studies conceived as a dramatic and ongoing *intellectual* event" (Pinar, 2015a, p. 4) that in particular must take into account as well as question interrelations of specific subject and historical conditions that structure subjectivity.

Those querying dispositions undergirding a conception of curriculum studies as "dramatic and ongoing intellectual event" in relation to "education as a provocative phenomenon to be understood" have carried Bill's scholarship into ever-broadening contexts and considerations. For example, Bill has reconceptualized (Pinar, 2007, 2013) the work of verticality as that of understanding the already-existing conversations in and of the field—those intellectual histories generated by concepts and ideas formulated in earlier eras

and still informing (or not) ones currently circulating. By positing verticality, the study of the field's intellectual histories, as one disciplinary structure of curriculum studies, Bill not only has emphasized the concurrent necessity of studying external circumstances that have framed and influenced those histories, but also has reclaimed the concept of verticality as documenting the very ideas that constitute the complicated conversation that *is* the academic discipline of curriculum studies.

Bill argues that the second and intertwined disciplinary structure of horizontality requires not only sustained study and analyses of the field's present set of intellectual circumstances—the concepts that structure disciplinary conversation now—but also of political and social worldly political influences, events, situations that influence, and “all too often, structure this set” (Pinar, 2007, p. xiv). And further, because history in all its temporal and spatial contextualizations renders present circumstances intelligible, Bill argues that internationalization affirms these intertwined disciplinary structures as supporting intellectual advancement of the worldwide, but not similar curriculum field.

As my own affirmation of what I agree is imperative work for the field that Bill's conceptualizations of verticality and horizontality address, it is to miniature forms of such that I now turn. I here paint an expressionist wash of memory that semi-transparently layers my interpretations of certain U.S. curriculum “histories” and biographies. I too glaze particular portions of a small segment of U.S. curriculum studies' past as possibly signaling eventual synthetic moments of mobilization around curriculum reconceptualization—and beyond.

These moments are deeply situated in specific U.S. curriculum studies circumstances. I am mindful of multiple and differing contextual variations as well as numerous genealogies that might be spun from any iterations of particular temporal and site-specific U.S. curriculum studies (see, for example, Schubert, Lopez-Schubert, Herzog, Posner, & Kridel, 1988; Kridel, Bullough, & Shaker, 1996).

Further, I am acutely aware that the cosmopolitan cause of curriculum studies calls us to work against the parochialism generated and perpetuated by knowing only one's own field, even though the work of one's “own” field most often remains embedded primarily in a specific national culture and its regional settings (Pinar, 2015a). Earlier, I had suggested to U.S. curriculum scholars that our efforts to refuse parochialism must be impelled, in great part, by the “necessary worldliness of U.S. curriculum studies” (Miller, 2005). And now, I recognize possibilities generated by working with/in internationalization as even requiring a suspension of one's assumptions of “expertise—certainly inevitably embedded in national history and culture—in order to understand (clarify and appreciate) the work of colleagues working within different national histories and cultures” (Pinar, 2015b, p. 25).

My following memory wash, layered with large brush strokes across telescoped time and space, expresses a microcosmic dilution of particular “pasts”

that gesture toward certain versions of curriculum theorizing and studies that originated, and then both expanded and moved well beyond specific U.S. contexts. This wash, understood as one among many possible portrayals, cannot function as any “evidence” of unambiguous themes and events that can be correlated with current versions and circumstances of curriculum studies internationalized, for example. But these brushstrokes do extend this wash of recollections as hinting toward possibilities for such studies that now have spun into varied configurations worldwide.

At the same time, the “pasts” that I here paint most obviously reference and are situated through my construal of personal and professional histories that shimmer in my present and, I imagine, will continue to tinge any curriculum studies futures and communities that I might desire and commit to work toward becoming (Miller, forthcoming). Even as a wash never fully delineates a full spectrum of color nor shapes definitive sketches, so too am I persuaded that can I never fully recuperate or reconstruct or claim with any certainty those memories or their “meanings” concerning past incidents and interactions among relational beings. Nor can I ever fully know or represent that which remains enigmatic, especially all that abides in my own alterity, my own opacity. At the same time, my own foreignness to myself, ironically, is the basis of my ethical connection with others (Butler, 2015). Ultimately, then, I offer this memory wash as indicator of particular sources and performances of “ethical connections with others” that I believe already have and should continue to frame the field’s intellectual studies.

Every other week or so, Paul Klohr rang the doorbell of my \$70-a-month Alhambra Court apartment on North High Street in Columbus, Ohio. I lived just a few blocks north of Ramseyer Hall where Paul taught as Professor at The Ohio State University and where I studied. I hung at the bottom of the stairs near our appointed time so that I quickly could unlock the door, greet and follow Paul up and into my tiny living room space. His cup of tea waited on a side-table. He sank into the overstuffed armchair, and invariably congratulated himself for finding what he called “this little gem of an apartment.” He indeed *had* apartment-hunted, once he knew that I would be arriving in Columbus via the encouragement of my Masters advisor at the University of Rochester, Bill Pinar. In fact, Bill and I had driven to Columbus in the summer prior to the start of my doctoral studies to apartment-search. Upon arrival, Paul gleefully steered us into a modest conclave of weathered two-story apartment buildings facing each other across a small courtyard. A rental agent waited for us on the lawn, and then led us up and into the only apartment available. I opened the French doors that separated the apartment’s three rooms, rocked for a few minutes on the porch swing hung from the eaves of the tiny balcony overlooking Alhambra’s quad of green grasses, and signed the rental agreement. When I did move into that apartment, Paul handed me an angel wing begonia plant that he had dug up and potted from his abundant garden on Walhalla Drive.

I still have that begonia, whose numerous clippings now reside and flourish in various friends' homes.

Paul's visits typically followed the teaching of his renowned 860—Curriculum Development course, invariably filled with fifty to eighty students. Paul and I began our cups-of-tea ritual early on in my doctoral studies with him as well as with Don Bateman in Humanities Education-English, who also had served as Bill's co-advisor. Paul and Don—both of them generous, brilliant professors and mentors—had been teachers as well as faculty members in Ohio State's Laboratory School, for which Paul too had served as Director. What I quickly learned, and what myriad students continue to attest, was that Paul's quiet and yet stirring pedagogy—informed by his own classroom teaching experiences, his Lab School Directorship, and his work as coordinator of curriculum and in-service education in the Columbus Public Schools—always was infused, as was Don's, with wide-ranging theoretical readings.

Paul usually arrived for our talks already worn from lecturing and conversing with his "860 students." So, the sipping of our initial cups of tea often would accompany a practice Paul too taught me—the throwing and then readings of the *I Ching*. This ritual allowed Paul to settle in a bit, to not speak for a while. But his second cup of tea most often would revive him, allowing him to spin any of his *I Ching* conjectures into analogies and extensions that framed our talks about the budding reconceptualization of U.S. curriculum studies—a reconceptualization that Paul was convinced could expand the field's technical-rational conceptions of its work.

Over our third cup of tea one early evening, Paul asked if I would mind listening as he practiced the "State of the Field" paper that he soon would present at the October (Klohr, 1974) Curriculum Theory Conference at Xavier University in Cincinnati, Ohio—the second gathering of those interested in a revisioning of the field. This Xavier conference was to build upon the 1973 conference at University of Rochester, a conference that Paul had strongly influenced and encouraged Bill to organize and chair.

What Paul articulated, first over teacups and then later to that assembled Xavier conference crowd, were specific themes that he interpreted as having been fermenting since their stirrings in 1967 at The Ohio State University "Curriculum Theory Frontiers" conference that Paul had helped to organize. In his Xavier presentation, Paul greatly expanded aspects to which James Macdonald (1971) had gestured in his well-known essay, "Curriculum Theory." There, Macdonald, in furthering his own theorizing from that 1967 conference, argued for what he regarded as an urgently needed reconceptualizing of the curriculum field. In so doing, Macdonald delineated his analyses of the developmental as well as empirical emphases of the "already traditional" field. But it was the third category in Macdonald's analysis, that of theorizing as a "creative intellectual task" wherein individuals engage in modes of inquiry that might aid creation of "the new," to which Paul directly



spoke in his Xavier presentation. Paul's perceptions of possible strands of curriculum theorizing that could enable such included:

- a holistic, organic view is taken of man [sic] and his relation to nature;
- the individual becomes the chief agent in the construction of knowledge; that is, he [sic] is a culture creator as well as a culture bearer;
- the curriculum theorist draws heavily on his [sic] own experiential base as method;
- curriculum theorizing recognizes as major resources the preconscious realms of experience;
- the foundational roots of their theorizing lie in existential philosophy, phenomenology, and radical psychoanalysis, also drawing on humanistic reconceptualizations of such cognate fields as sociology, anthropology, and political science;
- personal liberty and the attainment of higher levels of consciousness become central values in the curriculum process;
- diversity and pluralism are celebrated in both social ends and in the proposals projected to move toward those ends;
- a reconceptualization of supporting political-social operations is basic;
- new language forms are generated to translate fresh meanings—metaphors, for example.

As I listened, over our final cup of tea that evening, to Paul's more elongated discussion of that which he had just read, I noted a shift in his demeanor—anticipation and eagerness rather than any leftover hint of weariness now animated his talk. I shivered a bit in the autumn night air wafting through my open apartment windows—perhaps sensing too that something already had been offered to the curriculum field, something that was undeniably fresh—a break.

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This wash of memory—highlighting Paul's rehearsing of that which he envisaged for the field—does not in any way posit definitive, cause-effect meanings of any of our tea-drinking musing moments. Nor do I declare Paul's and my conversations to always have included the studious attention to that which Bill since has characterized curriculum as complicated conversation. We did enjoy gossip with our tea.

What I do mean to suggest is that these framings that Paul debuted at the 1974 conference helped to both delineate and extend the work to conceptualize curriculum theory as a distinctive field of study, especially as influenced by social theory and the arts and humanities. Paul's scholarly assessment of the "state-of-the-field" juxtaposed that specialization's possible orientations and primary concerns *against* those of education as a field broadly modeled after the social and behavioral sciences. In so doing, Paul not only reinforced those emphases and concerns that Bill, in the 1973 conference at Rochester, had named as "Heightened Consciousness, Cultural Revolution and

Curriculum Theory,” but also extended the momentum of that conference through and well beyond the 1974 Xavier one. Paul’s contributions, alongside Bill’s as well as those of Jim Macdonald, Maxine Greene and Dwayne Huebner, among others, in fact constituted curriculum field-altering work.

In particular, I believe that Paul’s articulations of emphases that enlivened curriculum theorizing as a “creative intellectual task” both deeply contributed to and, at the same time, reflected Bill’s already emerging conceptualizations of all that might attend to and enhance individuals’ understandings of their educational experiences *as* curriculum. Paul’s own extensive study as a life-practice—the same practice that occupied Bill even before his graduate work with Paul at Ohio State—led them both, in solitary as well as communicative study, to attend to theoretical stands and developments both inside and, more often, outside the discipline of education, for example.

Later, Bill would encapsulate those emphases as well as practices of study that both he and Paul had pursued in depth by situating curriculum theory as the interdisciplinary study of educational experience, with an emphasis on “the subject” as double entendre—both subject matter and the individual. Paul’s emphasis on the individual as chief agent in knowledge construction, who draws on her own experiential base as method, directly referenced Bill’s own immersion in phenomenological and psychoanalytic theories. As well, Paul was noting Bill’s burgeoning work (soon in conjunction with Madeleine Grumet) to conceptualize *currere* as an autobiographical method for working toward understanding of one’s own “running of the course,” the lived experience of curriculum. Historical as well as present circumstances and possible futures, Bill now argues, mediate such understandings.

I indeed was privileged to glimpse possible incitements and crucial support for Bill Pinar’s evolving and evolved intellectual studies. So, yes, I’ve splashed a wash of memory here, a certain version of Paul’s and my conversations that trailed through my Alhambra Court apartment and into Paul’s office in Ramseyer, his Walhalla home, often too in concert with other doctoral students and faculty, and with Bill on the many occasions of his visits to Columbus.

But perhaps my wash of memory—a miniature, truncated and thus extremely limited rendering of verticality and horizontality—more than anything else also alludes to those affirmative desires “to respect the Other, to pay attention to the Other, not to destroy the otherness of the Other.” I’ve attempted to do so by suggesting this wash as affirming my desire for both the examination and the very preservation that a questioning stance can encompass.

I’ve thus quickly brushed this memory wash in order to also acknowledge and honor the work of curriculum as a set of relations of interdependency, passion and interrogation—all of which, I suggest, might allude to aspects of verticality and horizontality as well. Because I am persuaded that the relation to the other is an articulation of the ethical itself (Butler, 2015), I maintain too that accompanying such is an ethical injunction to preserve those bonds of relationality because curriculum—whatever its conceptions—never stands alone.

Paul Klohr's "state-of-the-field" address was an affirmation, then—not only of and for Bill Pinar, but also for the curriculum field in all of its possible manifestations. Bill, as embodiment of "fresh" (one of Paul's favorite words) potentials, released and continues to open curriculum studies to new questions and conceptualizations. Paul saw all of these potentials, I believe, all the while both sharing and generating with Bill such commitments as well as the questions they raise. This memory wash is impelled too, then, by my desires not only to gesture toward ways that the past structures and discloses the present, but also to suggest how the bringing of questions and new imaginings into the field and its theorizings can serve as part of the affirming practice of love itself.

Like the mentor he loved, Bill Pinar enacts the daily difficult yet loving labor of study and of engaging in interrogations that study provokes. His scholarship worldwide stands as " . . . ethical engagement with alterity, accenting the concept of 'understanding' with history, activism, and the fore fronting of difference," (Pinar, 2013, p. 12). Curriculum as both he and Paul Klohr conceived, and as Bill continues to live it, thus can constitute a condition of curriculum—for showing what we value and even perhaps what new angles of theorizing to consider and to pursue, not only to work to transform anew, but also to preserve what is left of what we love.

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# 14 Disciplinarity and Interdisciplinarity

## William Pinar's Complicated Conversation with Curriculum Studies

*Marla Morris*

I want to do two things in this chapter. First, I would like to flesh out Pinar's position on disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity. Second, I would like to unpack what scholars outside the field of curriculum studies are writing about when approaching the topics of disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity so as to situate Pinar's work in the broader conversation.

### **Pinar on Disciplinarity: A Dialectical Relation**

William Pinar (2007) is one of the few contemporary curriculum theorists who emphasizes the need for disciplinarity. In his groundbreaking book, *Intellectual Advancement Through Disciplinarity: Verticality and Horizontality in Curriculum Studies*, Pinar (2007) suggests that curriculum scholars begin thinking about what it means to engage in disciplinary work. This seems a commonsense notion, but it is not. Disciplinarity seems to be a taken-for-granted notion that scholars must attempt to unpack.

Pinar (2007) suggests that disciplinarity involves the movement of what he calls verticality and horizontality. Symbolically, verticality is a movement that goes down, like the root of a tree. Horizontality symbolizes movement across, say, a field of trees. The movement down and the movement across are in dialectical relation with one another. Disciplinarity requires both of these movements. Pinar (2007) explains: "The first of the disciplinary structures I propose we cultivate is verticality, by which I mean the intellectual history of the discipline. What ideas formulated in earlier eras inform those in ours" (p. xiii). Pinar et al. (1995) *Understanding Curriculum* and my project *Curriculum Studies Guidebooks Volumes 1 & 2: Concepts and Theoretical Frameworks* (2016) are books that examine the field historically and are symbolically like the root of a tree. They go down deeply into the history of the field.

In dialectical relation with verticality is the notion of horizontality. Pinar (2007) explains: "The second disciplinary structure is horizontality: analyses of present circumstances" (p. xiv). The past and the present form a dialectical relation that "structure" the field. Scholars must study verticality and

horizontality simultaneously if the field is to advance, Pinar (2007) suggests. Moreover, Pinar et al. (1995) state that curriculum scholars must “build on what has been done already” (p. 856) and Pinar (1994) contends that “[w]hat is also required is the sketching of what one sees as the relation to his or her work to that being done contemporaneously in the field” (p. 64). In order to know the relation of one’s work to the field, one must study the field historically so as to know what the conversation is.

The discipline of curriculum studies is at once a “collective” (Pinar, 1994, p. 64) endeavor, yet the field is “moving in multiple directions” (Pinar, 2011, p. 123). Pinar (2011) claims that

The character of US curriculum studies remains a project under construction.

No one works from a blank slate. No single, even canonical, concept—alignment with society (Bobbitt) or society’s reconstruction through human intelligence (Dewey), curriculum development through protocol (Tyler), curriculum practice as deliberation (Schwab), curriculum for the sake of transcendence (Huebner), and humanization (Macdonald)—solves the disciplinary problem of the present moment, a divergent field moving in multiple directions.

(p. 123)

Curriculum studies is a field—a discipline—that is highly complex and ever changing—but still as Pinar (1994) points out, we are a “collective” (p. 64). Thus, there is a dialectical relation between our collective “aspirations” (Pinar, 1994, p. 64) and a field that is highly diverse and constantly changing. Pinar et al. (1995) anticipated that the field might change in ways that were not foreseen in 1995. Pinar et al. (1995) wrote: “The American field of curriculum is moving rapidly. We have feared that the discipline which, after ten years of study we are confident we see fairly clearly now, may not be the field emerging on the horizon” (p. xiii). Indeed the field has changed since 1995.

### **Pinar on Interdisciplinarity: The Voyage Out**

Our work as curriculum scholars is rooted in understanding curriculum (Pinar et al., 1995). But a second step is also necessary: interdisciplinarity, about which Pinar (1994) writes about in “The Voyage Out,” where he states that “[o]ne task of the curriculum theorist is a continual, careful, insistent pressing the limits of our thinking” (p. 117). Interdisciplinary work is where we “press the limits of our thinking” (p. 117). It is here that scholars take what Pinar calls “The Voyage Out.” Interdisciplinary thinking requires us to explore fields other than our own in order to better understand curriculum. When we “voyage out,” we take risks because we are not experts in other fields. To complicate things even more, Pinar et al. (1995) claim

that “Naturally, the boundaries of each sector of contemporary curriculum scholarship are somewhat porous” (p. 51).

Pinar, throughout his work, explains that curriculum theory is an interdisciplinary field. Pinar (2011) states: “Curriculum studies is an interdisciplinary academic field devoted to understanding curriculum” (p. ix). Pinar (2004) asks: “What is curriculum theory? The short answer is that *curriculum theory is the interdisciplinary study of educational experience*” (p. 2, emphasis in original). Pinar (2012) states that curriculum studies is about “interdisciplinary intellectuality” (p. 11). Pinar (2006) claims that curriculum studies deals with “interdisciplinary subjects” (p. x). Pinar (2006) drives home the point that it is through interdisciplinary work that the field advances because it pushes boundaries and creates “novel” spaces through which to think about curriculum (p. 5). Here Pinar (2006) explains that curriculum theorists must “create”

... novel interdisciplinary configurations never before constructed. We work to create views (in other words, montages) of especially interdisciplinary configurations not visible in the compartmentalized curriculum organized around the school subjects.

(p. 5)

When we combine, for example, fiction, history, race, class, gender, politics, biography, poetry and so forth, we can come up with these “novel” conceptualizations that help us to understand curriculum. It is important to note that this idea of interdisciplinarity in curriculum studies is not new. Dwayne Huebner (1999) wrote about this kind of work years ago. Pinar (1999) emphasizes that Huebner was a man ahead of his time and that he has been “under-appreciated” (p. xv). He goes on to say that Huebner is “central to the field.” And certainly one can see how Pinar was influenced by Huebner’s interdisciplinary work.

Pinar (2001) writes about working in other fields in order to better understand curriculum:

Drawing upon research in various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, we can make curricular decisions concerning those configurations of knowledge, interdisciplinary in scope, hybrid in nature . . . in order to understand the nature of the public project . . . [of] education.

(p. 26)

Working in both the humanities and social sciences broadens our knowledge base. Erudition begins in this broader knowledge base. New knowledge can emerge when one takes risks by studying in other disciplines. Pinar (2009) suggests that we become more worldly or more cosmopolitan the more we push outside the boundaries of our own field. Pinar (2009) states

that “[a] curriculum for cosmopolitanism juxtaposes the particular alongside the abstract, creating collages of history and literature, politics and poetry, science and art” (p. vii).

### **Disciplinarity: Conversations Across the Curriculum**

Pinar’s work is interested in contemplating the context of the larger discussion scholars are having across the curriculum on disciplinarity. Joe Moran (2010) points out that the word *discipline* “derives from the Latin *disciplina*, which refers to the instruction of disciples and their elders, and it necessarily alludes to a specialized, valued knowledge which some people possess and others do not” (p. 2). Today, of course, graduate school is where we study with “elders” or professors to learn a new language, the language of the discipline. Martin Jay (2011) comments that

Training in a discipline, after all, involves more than mastering its methods and knowing how to apply them; it also entails becoming fully conversant with what we call the “literature” in the field, that is, its canon. Although we may work to go beyond it, [by engaging in interdisciplinarity] a struggle that ironically often involves acquiring knowledge of the canonical literature in another field, we cannot construct the objects of our inquiry *ex nihilo*.

(p. 41)

The implication here is that before studying other fields, students must know their own field in depth.

Joe Moran (2010) points out the formation of disciplines has a long history. Moran (2010) writes,

The idea of shaping knowledge into disciplines can be traced as far back as Greek philosophy. Aristotle, for example, organized different subjects into a hierarchy, according to whether they were theoretical, practical or productive.

(p. 3)

Aristotle ranks the theoretical above the practical and productive. Curriculum studies scholars who identify with the Reconceptualization also rank the theoretical as the highest form of knowledge. However, before the advent of the Reconceptualization in curriculum studies, the field was atheoretical. This was cause for concern because an atheoretical field, as Dwayne Huebner (1999) put it, has no “intellectual vitality” (p. 15).

David Downing (2005) argues that “[d]isciplinary practitioners seek control, autonomy, and jurisdiction over particular knowledge territories . . .” (p. 37). Pinar has emphasized that curriculum studies is a field with a particular history and particular players. Some doubt that we are an “autonomous”

field. Some even doubt that education is a field. And it is because of this attitude that we want to “seek control” over our field. Here I am thinking of the work of one Keith Hoskin (1993) who claims:

Education is not a discipline. Today, even to consider Education as a discipline is a cause for discomfort and embarrassment. Education is a subdiscipline, a melting pot for other “real” disciplines, best disregarded in serious academic company.

(p. 271)

These claims are outrageous. Perhaps this is what our colleagues across campus really think of us. And even some of our colleagues in colleges of education might think that curriculum studies is not a field.

Ivan Strenski (2002) suggests that “[d]isciplines are one of the ways we regulate intellectual interests in the realm of knowledge” (p. 153). Because curriculum studies is an interdisciplinary field it becomes difficult to “regulate” knowledge. Ellen Messer-Davidow, David Shumway and David Sylvan (1993) suggest that

... disciplinarity is about the coherence of a set of otherwise disparate elements: objects of study, methods of analysis, scholars, students, journals, . . . . To borrow from Foucault, we could say that disciplinarity is the means by which ensembles of diverse parts are brought into particular types of knowledge relations with each other.

(p. 3)

Two remarks are at hand here. First, curriculum studies as a discipline has its own history; particular scholars engage in curriculum studies scholarship; we have our own journals and conferences. “Knowledge relations” in our field are historical and theoretical. These knowledge relations, no matter what they might entail, always return home to the discipline, to the question “What is curriculum,” or “What does it mean to *understand* curriculum,” as Pinar so brilliantly puts it.

Julie Thompson Klein (1996) tells us:

Disciplinary in its present form is the result of a relatively recent development, little more than a century old. Nevertheless, its effects are visible throughout the knowledge system, from the organization of research and curriculum to criteria of excellence in the decisions of editorial boards, funding agencies, and tenure and promotion committees.

(p. 6)

The reconceptualization of curriculum studies is not a century old but rather dates back to the 1970s. Pinar’s paradigm shift—from a field that was ahistorical and atheoretical (i.e., see the work of Ralph Tyler) to a field



that is historical and highly theoretical is what gave the field its “intellectual vitality” (Huebner, 1999, p. 15). Curriculum scholars must continually work to *understand* curriculum by systematically studying books and articles in our field and keeping up with new literatures as they are published. The difficulty with doing this, though, is that the field constantly changes. Julie Thompson Klein (1996) states that

If there is an undisputed truth about disciplinarity, it is that disciplines change. Even as they debate the proper business of discipline, even as they measure and value change differently, all disciplinarians acknowledge the phenomenon of change.

(p. 186)

Curriculum studies—a field with a particular history—continually changes and it is difficult to keep up with the changes. And yet there are “boundaries” in fields, as Amanda Anderson and Joseph Valente (2002) point out. These scholars state that “[i]nside the academy, the value and merit of disciplinary boundaries and methods have become a highly contested issue” (p. 1). What exactly are the boundaries of curriculum studies? How far can we push these boundaries?

Being inside of a discipline—like curriculum studies—gives scholars a “sense of personal identity” as Frances Christine and Karl Maton (2011, p. 7) put it. Peter Weingart and Nico Stehr (2000) suggest:

[D]isciplines are not only intellectual but also social structures, organizations made up of human beings with vested interests based on time investments, acquired reputations, and established social networks.

(p. xi)

Being in a discipline means being in these “established social networks.” When we go to conferences we might feel a sense of community, even though there is much dissension among us. Jo Anne Pagano (1999) claims that there

is a need to reconceptualize “discipline” in terms of socio-intellectual communities. This means that in order to identify and characterize a disciplinary community, we must attend not only to subject matter, theoretical propositions, and research methodology, we must be equally attentive to social networks and boundaries that are constituted by scholars in the field.

(p. 83)

Curriculum studies scholars are in relation via these “socio-intellectual communities” about which Pagano speaks. The Bergamo Conference,

The Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, The International Association of Curriculum Studies and the Curriculum and Pedagogy conference are all places where curriculum scholars are in community.

### **Interdisciplinarity: Conversations Across the Curriculum**

Joe Moran (2010) writes that interdisciplinarity arose because of the limits of disciplinary scholarship. He traces the emergence of interdisciplinary scholarship back to the 1920s. Moran (2010) explains here:

... the critique of the academic disciplines as limited and confining is as long-standing as the disciplines themselves. Historically, this critique has often taken the form of referring back to an older, more unified form of knowledge, usually located in an undisciplined subject such as philosophy.

(p. 13)

The purpose of a discipline is to put boundaries around what can be thought, what can be written about, what knowledges count. But as Moran (2010) states above, this can be “confining” and “limited.” Julie Thompson Klein (1996) suggests that

For much of the twentieth century, the surface structure of academic institutions has been dominated by disciplinaries. Interdisciplinaries tended to be located in the “shadow structure,” to borrow Charles Lemert’s term for the composite set of structures and strategies that challenge the prevailing metaphor of disciplinary depth. . . . In the latter half of the twentieth century, the balance of surface and shadow structure is changing.

(p. 4)

The “shadow structure” of interdisciplinarity has now become the “surface structure.” Fields such as women’s and gender studies, religious studies, American studies, cultural studies are all interdisciplinary.

David Downing (2005) worries about what he calls “academic stability” in the context of interdisciplinary work. He states that “[a]cademic stability seems to give way to the crossing, splintering, and pulling apart of disciplinary boundaries as the modern university becomes more disorganized or “disaggregated” (Leitch, *Theory Matters*, p. vii). But was there ever a time when there was such a thing as “academic stability?” As new knowledges emerge, disciplines continually change. Change is often felt as being chaotic: new paradigm shifts have been occurring since the invention of the

university, and when paradigms change, scholars might feel uncomfortable. Amanda Anderson and Joseph Valente (2002) tell us that

Many critics of interdisciplinary innovation charge it with superficiality, lack of rigor, and abandonment of those carefully developed methodologies that have assured disciplinary integrity and success. Supporters of interdisciplinarity argue in return that their hybrid practices generate new forms of knowledge. . . .

(p. 1)

Interdisciplinarity has opened up the field of curriculum studies since the Reconceptualization. “New forms of knowledge” (Anderson & Valente, 2002, p. 1) come about when unusual concepts are blended together or unusual combinations of ideas challenge static ways of thinking. Still, some conservative scholars are suspicious of interdisciplinary work. Ian Angus (2011) suggests,

. . . there are dangers of interdisciplinarity: the lack of a canon often leaves one without clear, or sufficiently theoretically developed, points of orientation, leading to the permanent temptation of eclectism.

(p. 52)

Working from a home discipline—such as curriculum studies—is where scholars find a canon of work. From that canon of work, they can take leaps into other domains. And too there are canons in those other fields as well. Now, it is true that one cannot be a specialist in other fields, but one can study to such an extent that she or he knows enough to make an impact on the field: to advance the field, even. Peter Weingart (2000) tells us that “[a] typical reaction to interdisciplinarity is to insist on disciplinary competence as a prerequisite (cf. Mittelstrass, 1987, p. 154)” (p. 29). One must know one’s home field before leaping into other fields. Most importantly, one must be rigorous when studying both one’s home field and other fields.

Joe Moran (2010) writes that “the very idea of interdisciplinarity can only be understood in a disciplinary context” (p. ix). In academe, scholars are trained in particular disciplines and it is from those disciplines that connections will be made when exploring other fields. I suggest that there is a dialectical relation between disciplinary and interdisciplinary work. This dialectic is a back and forth movement between home turf and the exploration of other fields. Scholars who work in an interdisciplinary field must have a continual dialogue between their home field and other fields upon which they draw. Julie Thompson Klein (1996) writes:

The relationship [between disciplinary and interdisciplinary work] is often depicted as an opposition, a paradox, or a dichotomy (Roederer, 1988, p. 659; Klein, 1990b, p. 106). Close inspection of boundary crossing

reveals that disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity are productive tensions in a dynamic supplement, complement, and critique.

(p. 4)

Parallel universes is another way to think about the relation between disciplines and doing interdisciplinary work. And to draw on Thompson here, one might suggest that these parallel universes are in a “productive tension” with each other.

Curriculum studies as a field is certainly in “productive tension” with many other fields of study. This is what makes curriculum studies such an exciting adventure. And this adventure we owe to William F. Pinar.

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# 15 Becoming Inter-national

## Autobiography, Curriculum, and Hyph-e-nated Subjectivities

*Nicholas Ng-A-Fook*

I am asking us to reconstruct our understanding of what it means to teach, study, to become “educated” in this present moment.

William F. Pinar (2012, p. xiii)

During the summer of 2000, I met Bill Pinar for the first time. He was a visiting professor at York University. That July, I took his *Introduction to Curriculum Studies* course. Prior to that moment, I worked as a long-term occasional teacher at an inner city high school. At the end of that school year, the Ontario provincial government amalgamated school boards increased teacher workloads, implemented a core curriculum, standardized testing, and a qualifying certification exam for teachers (Pinto, 2012). The prospects of becoming a classroom teacher within those contexts no longer seemed “feasible.” I returned to graduate school with the hope of becoming a future school administrator. The schooling system itself, at least for those new to the teaching profession at that time, seemed to be a hopeless place. Or, to use Joseph Schwab’s term: *Moribund!*

During my master’s thesis, working with Celia Haig-Brown (2009) as my advisor, I continued to draw extensively on Bill’s (1975/2000) theoretical and methodological concept of *currere in search of a method* that would enable a “returning to the differing historical origins of our biographies in relation to the spirit of re-envisioning and reconstructing ourselves in the face of ‘international, national and provincial school reforms’” (Pinar, 2015, pp. 22–23). Within my thesis, *Toward a Vulnerable Education*, I sought to understand the following curricular questions: How does a diasporic subjectivity begin to decolonize lived experiences as autobiographical research? How does one become an international curriculum theorist, educational researcher, administrator, teacher, and/or (cosmopolitan) citizen in relation to unsettling decolonizing questions? Attending to the macro and micro complexities of such curricular questions requires, as I have suggested elsewhere, a critical excavation, an affirmative deconstruction, a recursive and reflexive praxis to decolonize our lived educational experiences and relations as Indigenous and non-Indigenous inter-national hyph-e-nated subjectivities.

Here we might briefly turn to the theoretical work of Wah, a Canadian poet laureate, to reconceptualize the thoughtful and playful spaces between cross-cultural hyph-e-nations, of curricular doublings, while curriculum theorizing toward becoming inter-national hyph-e-nated subjectivities. Lingering and theorizing within the poetics of hyph-e-nated spaces is where the hyphens among nation, culture, and subject, as Wah (1996) makes clear, both binds and divides. And yet, even when the hyphen is doubly represented in a name like Ng-A-Fook, inter-national complexities often remain “silent and transparent” within the contexts of public school (Wah, 2004, p. 73). Here the transparency of the hyphen thus becomes a thorn—an aporia, a perpetual deferral of signs, signifiers, and signified—in the side of what we might call predetermined discursive and representational colonial configurations (Wah, 2004). In this chapter, I suggest that playing, theorizing, and narrating life histories of hyph-e-nated subjectivities becoming international affords us opportunities to understand the contradictions, paradoxes, and theoretical assumptions active at the edges of the hyphen. “This constant pressure that the hyphen brings to bear against the master narratives of duality, multiculturalism, and apartheid,” as Wah (2000) stresses, “creates a volatile space that is inhabited by a wide range of voices” (p. 74). In this essay, then, I draw on the work of William F. Pinar to discuss the various ways his concept of *currere* has enabled my teaching to make interstices at the margins of the hyphen more audible and their cross-cultural pigmentations more visible. Let us turn to *currere* . . . and surf the temporal hyphens of becoming inter-national narratives.

### **Unsettling Intergenerational Internationalizations of the Subject: Oh Canada!**

It is, then, the subject—simultaneously in the sense of both the human subject and the academic discipline—in which and through which internationalization occurs.

(Pinar, 2011a, p. 1)

A month prior to the events of September 11, 2001, I travelled to Baton Rouge to study the intellectual topographies of “curriculum theory” with Bill Pinar. I remember that fall, amongst the images of falling towers, the burning pentagon, and Flight 93, the deafening singing of cicadas foreshadowing a future of what was yet to come. For the first time, I was more attuned toward becoming an inter-national student in the eyes of others. Due to my studies, I began to understand the historical significance of what we might call the “internationalization”—cultural, historical, and intellectual—of a hyph-e-nated subjectivity. I was experiencing another turning point. Walking across the grounds, smelling the azaleas in full bloom, I asked Bill, “Should I change my last name?” hoping this would facilitate the migratory

movements necessary to enter the “ivory” gates of academia. “But why!” you might ask . . . should one seek to reconstruct the hyph-e-nated inter-national signifier that represents the cosmopolitan complexities of one’s subjectivity?

Like other commonwealth nations, Canada’s educational system works to socially reconstruct individual and collective subjectivities toward becoming cohesive and prosperous citizens who can then contribute capital to the local, national, and international knowledge economy. This is the neoliberal dream presented to first generation immigrants. Yet learning to become a recognized hyph-e-nated Canadian citizen does not come that easily (Haig-Brown, 2009; Ng-A-Fook, 2009). Prior to graduate school, I sought to escape the temporal thorns at the ends of such nationalizing hyphens. Let us regress again for a moment across the temporal hyphens of such thorns. To do so, I turn to Pinar’s (2006, 2012) concepts of “*currere*” and “juxtaposition,” where I work to paraphrase and juxtapose historical narratives, which have yet to be in relation with each other before this inter-textual moment in time.

In 1998, I graduated from Teacher’s College in Australia with the qualifications to teach high school Ancient History, Australian History, and Science. I desired the sensuous experiences that embody the physical and intellectual estrangement of a new place. At the University of Western Sydney (UWS), now studying as an inter-national student, a foreigner, a stranger, I did not learn about the Indigenous people who have lived and dreamed across this landscape since time immemorial. Instead, we discussed progressive, inclusive educational practices, which in turn focused on developing classroom management strategies and lesson plans for children who had different learning or physical abilities. The teacher education program reproduced certain curricular sites of erasure, where different subjectivities ceased to be recognized within the social imaginary of Australian and non-Australian citizens. And yet, these institutional reproductions of such *epistemologies of ignorance in education* exceed the temporal and physical borders of this particular “commonwealth” nation (Malewski & Jaramillo, 2011).

My father also attended the commonwealth educational system, but in British Guiana, which promoted imperialistic ideals, such as, but not limited to, civility. “The organization for school knowledge, the hidden curriculum and the representation for difference in texts and school practices,” as Smith (1999) reminds us, “all contain discourses which have serious implications for Indigenous students as well as for other minority ethnic groups” (p. 11). Within this colonial discursive regime, my father learned about the “heroic” histories of the Greeks, Romans, and British Empire: what Willinsky (1998) calls the disciplines of *learning to divide the world*. In 1966, (some of) the Guyanese people gained their independence. Linden Forbes Burnham became the country’s first Prime Minister. He then implemented anticolonial nationalistic policies that had financial implications for different local, national, and international families and their respective small businesses. Like Castro in Cuba, he worked to renationalize several businesses that were formerly



owned by foreign multinational companies. My grandfather was able to borrow money, travel to Chattanooga, Tennessee, and purchase an industrial ice-cone machine. On the backs of former slaves, indentured, and Indigenous labor, small businesses like his were able prosper within the Marxist economy of this governmental regime. A generation later our family reconstructed their cosmopolitan subjectivities (Ng-A-Fook, 2015; Pinar, 2009). They went from “being” indentured laborers toward “becoming” postcolonial profiteers. Eventually, my father’s family lived in a plantation-like big “White house” in Georgetown, the capital, on Thomas Street.

In 1963, my father travelled to the United Kingdom as an international student to study medicine at the University of Glasgow. During his studies he met Elizabeth Gray, an Irish-Scottish psychiatric nurse. His parents disapproved of their marriage. She was not Chinese or Guyanese. Consequently, they both endured the alienation that racialized mixed couples continue to encounter both inside and outside of commonwealth countries (Ng-A-Fook, 2012). After being refused citizenship by her Majesty of the United Kingdom, our family returned to Guyana while waiting for our Canadian immigration status to be approved. In 1975, we immigrated to Canada. After a short stay in Toronto, my father was able to establish a prosperous family practice in a small rural logging town called Kapuskasing (meaning: *bend in the river* in the local Anishnaabeg language) in northern Ontario.

We attended the French Catholic schooling system in order to become proficient in the local and provincial Franco-Ontario language and culture. And yet, the name Ng-A-Fook was definitely not the norm among franco-phone names such as *Boucher*, *Carrière*, or *Tremblay*. Canadian children were aptly aware of such discursive and visible ethnic differences. We exploited each other’s hyph-e-nated subjectivities in the schoolyard. Ng-A-Spook, Nigger-Fuck, Chink, and slanted-eyes were the “butt” of racialized “jokes” during recess. Fist-fighting and wrestling on the dirt of these fenced-in discursive grounds, I learned that name-calling was part of becoming a “normalized” multicultural Canadian citizen. In high school, I coped with such racializations by bearing the word “Chink” on the sleeve of our soccer team jacket. I re-appropriated the power of this racialized word as a nickname. I internalized and reconstructed the terms of my oppressors’ discursive oppression. I became, in a (non)sense, a caricature of *Cyrano de Bergerac*. And yet . . . I was unaware of the derogatory, historical, and symbolic meanings of the word *Chink*! During the 1860s, some 10,000 to 14,000 Chinese laborers provided the human capital for building the transcontinental railroad (Wolf, 1982/2010). Erased from the school curriculum and our public memories were the Chinese who died *thinking* across the continental landscapes of North America. Instead, we accepted it for what it was . . . an ahistorical misappropriated racialized nickname.

My first job as a high school teacher in Canada was at Georgian Bay Central High School. At the end of the job interview, Principal Johnson cautioned: “Nicholas, you might think about changing your last name to Ng.”

I rationalized that it made sense to change our family surname. At that point in time, an *understanding* of the colonial, historical, and international complexities of my Great Grandfather's first and last names were not yet intellectually or discursively close-at-hand. In response, part of my autobiographical-intellectual research has sought to *understand* the inter-national hyph-e-nations that call us to attention when asking: "Who was Ng-A-Fook? Who is Ng-A-Fook? What will become of Ng-A-Fook?" These are the kinds of autobiographical questions we might ask of a curriculum theory concept named *currere* in relation to teacher education: Who am I?

Prior to immigrating to British Guiana, Fook Ng was a shopkeeper in China. When he arrived, an English magistrate changed his name to John Cyril. Our family oral history is not clear about whether or not a British official gave him the name, or if he chose to adopt this Judeo-Christian Protestant name on arrival.

Principal Johnson implied that things would be easier for me as a new teacher if students and other staff members could enunciate my last name the non-hyph-e-nated way. So, from that day on, I was known at the school as Mr. Ng. The historical complexities of living Chinese-Guyanese-Irish-Scottish temporal, cultural, physical, and psychical hyph-e-nations were erased from the sleeves of my subjectivity through Principal Johnson's request. In some kind of (non)sense, Principal Johnson was attempting to shield me from the kinds of racialized welcoming I would later experience despite the change within the school community as a newly appointed (ethnic) teacher. This was part of my lived curriculum toward becoming a teacher in a settler colonial nation: Oh Canada! But wait! Let us question this kind of un-settling narrative accounting.

In *Settler Colonialism*, Lorenzo Veracini (2010) reminds us that "immigrant exogenous Others often benefit from the dispossession of indigenous people, even as their incorporation into the settler body politics remains pending. . . . [I]t is the settler that establishes himself as the normative" (p. 18). In turn, the settler often hides behind storylines of "the metropolitan colonizer," "labour and hardship," and "the peacemaker" (p. 14). Although we had rich and complicated conversations about the geopolitical contexts of our former homelands, the ways in which our migrations perpetuated the chain of settler colonialism remained absent from our curriculum at the dinner table. At school a Judeo-Christian commonwealth curriculum and its mythical portrayals of its democratic peacekeeping regime influenced the ways in which we socially imagined and narrated Canadian history in relation to other nation states (Donald, 2012). We were taught that French voyageurs and British pioneers sought to establish peaceful settlements that mimicked their respective "civilized" metropolitan institutions. Other inter-national settlers, such as but not limited to the Chinese, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Ukrainian, and the different local Indigenous communities, remained absent from the common countenance of what now constitutes Canada (Battiste, 2013; Stanley, 2006). They were not accounted for in our

life narratives. “Multiple identities or postcolonial contexts notwithstanding, Canadian curriculum,” as Chambers (2003) reminds us, “still standardizes a curriculum of national identity” (p. 245). Therefore, retelling these kinds of historical narratives of heroism and/or immigrant victimization, as Regan (2010) points out, often work to reinscribe a curriculum of, and lived as, settler denial. If individual life histories are the sites of remembering and reconstructing our subjectivities, as Bill Pinar (2010) suggests, how then might we work to reconstruct our subjectivities as hyph-e-nations within and beyond the contexts of Indigenous and non-Indigenous settler relations of denial?

### **Living Internationalization as Hyph-e-nations**

Rather than claiming for oneself a collective identity in which one presumes to be the representative, absent Other, one might refocus one’s moral obligation and pedagogical opportunity toward one’s own individual decolonization, wherein those internalized binaries structured by colonialism might be reconstructed as multiple and linked identities, traversing the divides history and politics cut in our psychic terrain.

(Pinar, 2009, p. 23)

It is, then, the subject—simultaneously in the sense of both the human subject and the academic discipline—in which and through which internationalization occurs.

(Pinar, 2011a, p. 1)

During my stay in the American South, Bill invited me to work on several projects related to the *Internationalization of Curriculum Studies*. Part of that work included copy-editing the following books: *The Internationalization of Curriculum Studies*, *The International Handbook of Curriculum Research*, and *Curriculum in a New Key*, a collection of Ted T. Aoki’s intellectual work. Little did I know at the time the deep impact such intellectual study would have on my future work as curriculum theorist at the University of Ottawa. Through the juxtaposition of my inter-disciplinary studies at LSU and intellectual excavations of my life histories (Pinar, 2015), I was able to study the internal and external circumstances of our field (its horizontality and verticality) in relation to the past and present economic, educational, political, and social circumstances of the United Houma Nation (UHN), the largest Franco-Indigenous community in Louisiana. Part of such studies sought to understand the lived experiences of Elders before, during, and after contesting their segregation from the Louisiana public schooling system. To do so, I spent four years living and working with the UHN government and its citizens. Such recursive and reflective decolonizing work involved studying the ways in which the different nations’ academic

institutions intellectually documented the Houmas' existential history toward extinction and exclusion from the intellectual gates of the academy. According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Houma people no longer exist. And as I learned then, multinational corporations supported by their respective nation states, like the French, British, and United States governments, had capitalized and profited from appropriating and then managing what was once the seasonal migratory landscape that constituted traditional Indigenous territories.

Understanding past hyph-e-nated international experiences of distancing and alterity, juxtaposed with history, autobiography, and not identity politics, testify as Bill Pinar (2009) stresses, "to injustice and injury, providing particular referents for totalizing abstractions that otherwise risk recapitulation of colonist binaries, if with reversed valences" (p. 25). Here, studying an Indigenous curriculum of place provoked me to reconsider the hyph-e-nated limits of my colonized social imaginary (Ng-A-Fook, 2007), or what Maxine Greene (1995) calls the "stirs to wide-awakeness, to imaginative action, and to renewed consciousness of possibility" (p. 43). Understanding the United Houma Nation's past and present circumstances in Louisiana created the necessary distancing and "openness to the contingent and provisional truth" of our shared relations and lived experiences in "History" (Pinar, 2011b, p. 5). Surfing and studying the temporal edges of such thought-provoking insights, engages imaginary action as a praxis of decolonizing our life histories and respective hyph-e-nated colonial settler subjectivities toward the possibility of reconciling past, present, and future Indigenous and non-Indigenous inter-national epistemic and material relations. For me, this is the hyph-e-nated subject of becoming international.

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# 16 Pinar's Influence on the Consolidation of Portuguese Curriculum Studies

*José Augusto Pacheco*

## Introduction

William Pinar has been a paradigmatic author with international influence, responsible for a different way of approaching and understanding the complicated conversation of curriculum. He has been an architect of curriculum, in the sense of what Rorty (1979) calls an *edifying thinker* when he quotes the philosophers whose production is constructive.

Bearing Foucault's ideas in mind, Pinar should be included in the "founders of discursivity" because "they are unique in that they are not just the authors of their own works. They have produced something else: the possibilities and the rules for the formation of other texts" (1979, p. 154). For Foucault, "the author's name serves to characterize a certain mode-of-being discourse" (p. 154). As a curriculum theorist, Pinar edified curriculum discourses by a paradigmatic shift, giving birth to a continuous valorization of the personal.

In this chapter, two intentions guide me: on one hand, I ponder Pinar's particular contribution to the formation of the international field in curriculum studies, since only he can be regarded as the main architect of this ongoing intellectual reconstruction. On the other hand, it is my wish to witness both personally and academically his real contribution toward internationalization by means of his activity in the consolidation of curricular studies in Portugal. I wish to consider the global influence of Pinar's work, as particularized by the Portuguese example regarding his reconstructive thinking against conservatives and predetermined ways of curriculum thinking.

## What Internationalization Is of Most Worth?

Paraphrasing the complex formation of the curriculum studies' field, and recognizing the wholly renowned part Pinar has played in that field, we must ask: *What internationalization is of most worth?* Although answers may be numerous, a perusal of Pinar's texts guides us to an approach for the meaning of internationalization and how distinct it is from globalization. From Pinar's several contributions to the curriculum studies' field—seven, that he could

count—he references internationalization: “Since 2000 . . . I have initiated an intellectual and organizational movement known as the internationalization of curriculum studies” (Pinar, 2009, p. 143). Pinar’s texts offer seminal ideas for the reconfiguration of a field earlier subjugated, in mid-1970s and early 1980s. And now in 2010, internationalization enables us to critically analyze certain adverse institutional conditions; namely, the “governmental imposition of international agencies’ globalization agenda, the incessant demands for ‘innovation’ and accountability, and the danger of intellectual manipulation through research funding priorities” (Pinar, 2011a, p. 236).

From this perspective, Pinar called for a concept of curriculum as a bridge between the social and subjective in relationship between public and private and more recently among the national, regional, and global. For him, education is a political, psychosocial, fundamentally intellectual reconstruction of the self and of society. His work in curriculum theory has “emphasized the significance of subjectivity to teaching, to study, to the process of education” (Pinar, 2004, p. 79). He refused reified political alternatives, influenced by a new sociology of education related to Bernstein’s and Young’s ideas in the 1970s, deeply embracing instead the primacy of individuality.

Knowing that historicity and subjectivity are two crossed references in the formation of curriculum studies, Pinar urged a genealogical study of curriculum studies in different countries, first in South Africa and Brazil and then in Mexico and the United States. Such study was not conducted—nor can its value be ascertained—by virtue of an external look. Instead, such value should be regarded as the recontextualization of a curriculum studies’ field “inside” the scholars, that is, “through the singularity of their subjectivities and life histories” (Pinar, 2011a, p. 3). Acknowledging the national formation of curriculum studies’ fields as particular intellectual movements, he highlights one method: “to study such ‘formation,’ I juxtaposed the scholar-participant’s life histories with their intellectual histories of the field and analyses of present circumstances, a strategy informed by *currere*, the lived experience of curriculum” (p. 4).

The intellectual histories and present circumstances of six nationally distinct curriculum studies’ fields have been studied by Pinar in search of a complicated conversation (2010a, 2011a, 2011 b, 2013, 2014b, 2015). The book he wrote concerning the curriculum field in the United States (2013) does not have the same structure, although he explores the “present circumstances” and the “intellectual histories.” Still, the concept of internationalization as explored by Pinar is not bound by a homogeneous process, since the present circumstances and intellectual histories of each country are confined to certain historical moments and specific geographic places. Pinar attests the worth of this worldwide but singular process in two of editions of the *International Handbook of Curriculum Research*.

Beyond being regarded as the intellectual father of internationalization, Pinar has been acknowledged as a leader in curriculum studies with a specific “*mode de penser*” (Pacheco, 2009). In a particular way, Pinar explores the



autobiographic approach that he's been practicing by addressing his own personal life through the lens of subjectivity. The category of subjectivity is central in Pinar's curriculum work. Because curriculum is highly symbolic, the study of curriculum demands to be historically, socially, and subjectively situated; that is, in terms of life story and self-formation (Pinar, 2005), researched through the *currere* method. At the same time, curriculum is a complicated conversation with self and the others, an excavation of the life experiences that enable us to understand our historically, socially, and culturally constructed subjectivities. By this method of *currere*, the self "becomes mobilized for engaged pedagogical action—as a private-and-public intellectual—with others in the social reconstruction of the public sphere" (Pinar, 2004, p. 50).

### **The Portuguese Example**

If it is not an overstatement to say that Pinar's work has precipitated a paradigm shift in the field: from curriculum "development" to "understanding" curriculum, from pedagogy to theory, as Mary Aswell Doll notes in the guidelines to composing chapters of this book. It is my belief that Pinar, in addition, deserves to be considered the father of the internationalization of curriculum studies. He is the most committed to the creation of national associations for advancement on curriculum studies and to the shared publication of books: intellectual histories and the present circumstances of South Africa (2010a), Mexico (2011a), Brazil (2011b), and the United States (2013), China (2014), and India (2015). We must also credit him with the 2003 and 2014a and 2014b editions of the *International Handbook of Curriculum Research*.

I personally met Pinar after he had been invited to be the keynote speaker in the First Portuguese and Brazilian Conference on Curriculum Studies held at the University of Minho in 2002. Pinar's response to the invitation was instant, conveying a deep academic collegiality. In spite of some pressures by a well-known academic who intended to undermine his participation in the conference, Pinar presented a paper titled "Inside Noah's Tent: The Sodomitical Genesis of Race in the Judaic-Christian Imagination." Some years later, in a private talk regarding the alleged pressure exerted by a North-American academic, Pinar confessed to me that he never gives in to influences. He noted that the academic endeavor that is undertaken in each country by scholars with their own intellectual identity must not be defined by pressures from external individuals who have their own agenda, superimposing it upon national realities. If curriculum is a complicated conversation, it is essential that we reach an academic consensus on what that conversation is, ethically and personally. Pinar's commitment to the concept of the conference was simply outstanding.

The paper submitted to the conference was part of a project that "continues the theorization of curriculum as a social psychoanalysis, here focused on

the confluences of race and sex in the Judaic-Christian imagination” (Pinar, 2002, p. 72). This title, sent by Pinar to Antonio Flavio Moreira, left the latter in complete unrest, triggering doubt that the content of the conference would be considered appropriate for a conservative and Catholic city such as Braga, Portugal. Indeed, the topic proposed by Pinar was provocative, especially in regard to his concepts of gender, race, and queer theory: the three hinges of Pinar’s curriculum theorization related to the politics of identity reconfigured by psychoanalytical theory. I pointed out to Moreira that this was an academic event and that the content of the conference would be crucial to understanding new approaches to curriculum studies. And so it was, since the ideas of his essay, delivered in Braga, delineated new topics concerning gender studies and queer theory. Queer theory represents a radical revision of gay and lesbian studies, informed by historical and social constructivist conceptions of sexuality. Queer theory focuses less on the recognition and assimilation of sexual minorities than on the critique of sexual majorities, specifically of ideologies of heteronormativity. As it turned out, Pinar’s ideas were not only broadly accepted by the Brazilian and Portuguese participants, but also provided an increased familiarity with his curriculum thought, mainly his concept of curriculum as a complicated conversation and his autobiographic method.

In the conference’s following iterations, Pinar became a leading figure, suggesting names to be the keynotes and participating in the choice of the thematics to be discussed in the conferences. Besides having also once again participated in the Portuguese and Brazilian Conference on Curriculum Studies, held in 2010 at the University of Porto, he also participated in the first and third International Conference on Curriculum Studies held at the University of Minho, in 2007 and 2010 respectively. His influence also reached the post-graduation programs on curriculum studies of the different Portuguese universities.

Due to this widespread participation in academic events, Pinar’s work became increasingly famous in the consolidation of curriculum studies in Portugal. One of the most prominent moments of Pinar’s influence occurred with the Portuguese translation of *What Is a Curriculum Theory?* This book, published in 2004, has been considered a canonical text for graduate students of curriculum studies and for teachers concerned with the study of curriculum in its theoretical complexity. Within this context of an international exchange among scholars, a perspective can be seen that significantly differs from the notion of globalization (itself more and more a synonym of homogenization). As Pinar puts it, such international exchange can foster “concern over the effects of globalization on the curriculum” (Pinar, 2011a, p. 224). Clearly, Pinar is promoting the consolidation of curriculum studies as “a global and local conversation” (Pinar, 2006, p. 163) to challenge “the standardizing processes of globalization against which numerous national cultures—and the school designed to reproduce those national cultures—are now reacting so strongly” (Pinar, 2009, p. 1).

Recently, Pinar supported my efforts in organizing the First European Association on Curriculum Studies, held at the University of Minho in October 2013, in which participated, among others, Tero Autio from Tallin University, Ivor Goodson from Brighton University, and Michael F.D. Young, from the University of London. Alongside Pinar, I've learned that curriculum studies has an identity of its own and that this identity is constantly debated. From the emails that we exchanged over the process of organizing the international event I learned from Pinar that events and institutions possess a certain relation with participants that, once created, can outgrow the horizons of its founders. From the initial ideas new projects arise, justified according to different interests, even if distinct from those that motivated the first course of action.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, Pinar encouraged me not to give up on the creation of the European association despite the resistance of some generalist associations.

Theorizing about the internationalization, Pinar advances the worldliness of a cosmopolitan curriculum as the primacy of the particular. Curriculum as worldliness is both possibility and practice, because it “cultivates comprehension of alterity, including that self-knowledge that enables understanding of others” (Pinar, 2009, p. 7). The worldliness of a cosmopolitan curriculum, as Pinar writes, “implies that general education is more than an introduction to ‘great works,’ the memorization of ‘essential’ knowledge, or a sampling of the primary disciplinary categories (three units in social science, three in natural science, etc.)” (p. 8). It acknowledges the personification of the individual: “understanding the subjectivity of the internationalization of curriculum studies accompanies my efforts to understand the field’s intellectual history and present circumstances, as the individual personifies that history and those circumstances” (Pinar, 2010a, p. 5).

## **Final Words**

Discussing the theoretical sustainability of the field, Pinar understands the curriculum as a complicated conversation, identifying new and diverse discourses based on the reconceptualization and post-reconceptualization. For those who have read his texts, it will be necessary to acknowledge the importance of his educational and curriculum approaches. As a curriculum leader, Pinar has introduced new intellectual contributions.<sup>2</sup> As Lincoln (1992, p. 83) acknowledges, he maintains “some control over the debate,” although the field’s confusions derive from conflicting groups.

Even though the reading of his work is mandatory for the consolidation of the autobiographic thread of curriculum studies, Pinar will also be known for the particular ways in which he acts internationally, participating in conferences around the globe and supporting the formation of curriculum’s national fields—as in the Portuguese case. With written and spoken ideas globally known, Pinar is a scholar who stands by the singularity of his

words and actions, encouraging his colleagues to be true to themselves in the contemporaneous debates on curriculum.

In an era of globalization, with its “discourse of standards and accountability” (Taubman, 2009, p. 3), the identity of the curriculum studies’ field is undergoing a time of great turbulence. “While globalization emphasizes standardization,” as he acknowledges (Pinar, 2011a, p. 234), “internationalization references intellectual exchanges among scholars” of nationally distinct fields. Among all his contributions, undoubtedly far more numerous than the seven that he has identified, Pinar’s personal active role has affirmed and consolidated the intellectual histories of the curriculum studies’ field in several countries. His concept of internationalization is ongoing and forward moving in what he describes as “placeholder for what might occur during the ‘next moment’ after this phase of ‘post-reconceptualization’” (Pinar, 2013, p. 51).

## Notes

- 1 In November 2012, Pinar sent me an email, witnessing: “It’s not possible to control one’s ‘child’ as you know. Certainly I know so from my experience with IAACS and AAACS. After starting something one has to watch it walk away.”
- 2 Among William Pinar’s various works, I highlight *The Character of Curriculum Studies: Bildung, Currere and the Recurring of the Subject*.

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## 17 An Embodied *Currere*

### Dance, Poetics, Place and Site-Specific Performance

*Celeste Snowber*

We are born in the particulars of a place a few places of deep intimacy geography  
of landscape geography of heartscape.

We get our skin around the details caress the nuances in a few places we are  
known here we are lovers in the world.

C. Snowber

I have had a lifelong fascination between the relationship of inner landscapes and outer landscapes and how one informs the other and is interdependent on each other. The field of curriculum studies, and particularly the work of William Pinar, has had a long history of inspiring me as a dancer/scholar/poet and educator in the forging of connections engaging in site-specific performances of poetry and dance. This performative work has taken place in a variety of settings, including outdoor spaces at curriculum and education conferences, but has grown to full scale site-specific performances where I bring an audience through a walk over a few hours and integrate dance, spoken word and poetry in connection to the seascape and landscape. These sites become a riparian zone: an intersection of salt and fresh water or habitats that are endangered, which transform into a generative space for words to break forth from lived experience, where the arts truly become a place of inquiry. I investigate the boundaries of how an embodied expressive relationship to the natural world has the capacity to shift our perceptions and understandings to our own autobiographical stories and the world. I draw on forms of poetic inquiry and performative forms of writing, which embody a visceral connection to language and the earth, rooted in autobiographical methods to articulate notions of longing and belonging (Prendergast, Leggo, & Sameshima, 2009; Richmond & Snowber, 2009, Snowber, 2013).

This chapter explores the ideas of William Pinar's work in connection to place, autobiography and *currere*, extending them to connect one dancer's articulations of the inner landscape of life through the outer landscape of the natural world. "An embodied *currere*" pushes the edges of place as an embodied entrance, to participate with creation in a dialogical relationship, where an artist listens to the textures of sea, wind, trees, colors, hues, sounds and living beings and creates out of this site-specific place. The gift of Pinar's

work has been to give me a framework to see writing as a place to hold and interpret experience; this too is curriculum. My interplay between dance, place and writing has been at the foreground of my work as a curriculum scholar for the past two decades. The notion and practice of *currere* has opened up the space for me to integrate autobiographical ways of inquiry not only with myself, but also in relation to others and to the natural world. Pinar's conceptualization has been the foundation for a body of work, which I believe is the root of many forms of arts-based research, including an autobiographical component. In particular, it is my research connecting place and its relationship between the internal and external landscape that has captured my curiosity and passion over the last decade. Here my soul flies, my hips move, my sternum rises to the sky and my belly contracts to the earth. I am given wings to expand and roots to ground my body to the soil. My language is a sensuous one, springing from the visceral imagination, a theorizing with the flesh. But without the foundation of autobiographical work rooted within reconceptual ways of understanding curriculum, I could not have forged ahead in creating room for alternative ways of speaking and writing within academe. I take Bill's (1994) words to heart and hands as he says, "Autobiography is an architecture of self, a self we create and embody as we read, write, speak and listen. The self becomes flesh in the world" (p. 220).

Although Pinar's relationship with place and its particularity is connected to the South, it is the emphasis on place that has informed my own exploration of how one is called from a place and continues a long journey to see both its impact and imaginative beckoning on a life. Part of my inquiry over the years is to explore the connection to place and my own ethnic heritage of being a daughter of an Armenian genocide survivor (my mother) and my Irish father. Over the last decade, I have traveled to both Armenia and Ireland to recover my history and connection to the land through the poetic. The land, stones, rock, sea, hold a memory. My feet on the earth recover these stories.

### **Stone to Stone**

I am letting you  
wash over me Armenia  
stone to stone  
hatchkar to hatchkar  
lavash to lavash  
thousands of miles away  
I still come home to  
your spring ancient  
and green  
and dip in the water  
of a baptized land  
I live between worlds

what I have carried within  
my flesh all these years  
and the country who  
birthed the Armen soul  
in my olive skin.

Stone to stone, rock to sea, tree to mud, is where my feet take me to explore the connection to land. I am after footnotes of another kind, where my feet find their way. Ultimately, as a dancer, I am having a conversation not only with my hands, but feet, and this conversation extends to the natural world. There has always been an emphasis in Pinar's work on conversation, and I take this conversation to the level of site-specific work. Conversation is not only with ourselves and one another, but with the sensate world. I believe Pinar writes as an artist, always seeking to explore, mine, discover and recover the relationality between history and the present, at the same time leaving room for the autobiographical voice that has inspired many for years. Here voice is not only personal, but political. My work has centered on listening to the voice of creation, which holds more than we know.

The beginnings of my curiosity with creation was rooted in my childhood by the sea. My lesson plans consisted of roaming the back rocks as we locals would call them. These were a few minutes' walk from the house I grew up in Nahant, Massachusetts, a tiny peninsula town of one square mile thirty minutes outside Boston. The back rocks hugged the edge of the sea—the rocky coast similar to many New England towns, home to fishermen and lobstermen. I knew them by heart and foot, where my soles would land where I'd brace my hand against a jagged rock for support. I knew where the pools would arise, so I could gaze at sea urchins and mollusks. I knew just the right time when the ocean would rise where we could get our bathing suits and jump into the cold Atlantic. The icy temperatures would tone down after a while—if we dared to stay in—and the invigorating sea would wash over my body. My first lessons were scavenging for discarded objects at the shore: seaglass and seaweed, driftwood and clamshells, and the possibility to harvest mussels and clams for supper. I was a child of the tides; the ebb and flow of high and low tide marked my days. From girlhood to womanhood, I was formed in these rocks and salt. I was crafting a sea intelligence at the shoreline. This was a deeply rooted body intelligence, where the curriculum of the sea formed and transformed me. I was a student of salt and sand, rock and starfish.

Of all the curricula I learned in school, it was only the lived curriculum of place, rooted in the rocky coast of Nahant, which had lasting value. My connection to place shaped a lifetime of writing, dancing and theorizing around what it means to be human, interconnected with all of life and the natural world. I was shaped in the school of solitude as an only child and had mounds of time by myself; the oceanic world was as much my siblings as my friends had theirs. And my friends were what I would now call “sea



friends”—offering lasting memories of our walking, swimming, gallivanting among shells and sand, sea glass and swims. Those bonds are still rich today—we are bonded by the salt of the earth. The salt of friendship. The friendship of salt.

illuminations  
wake in the spaces between  
tides of existence

I live in longing most of the time for coastal vistas and feel un-at home even in a spectacular, breathtaking city as Vancouver, Canada. The fierceness of coastal terrain is where I belong. New England, the Big Island of Hawaii, the Gulf Islands of Canada, the West Coast of Ireland and the Oregon Coast are where I find solace and sanctuary. My day-to-day life does not allow an infusion of these places, yet I hold the salt in my heart. The salt is in our body no matter what—in tears, in sweat—the ocean within the internal landscape of our physiology. We carry the ocean within us. The womb from which we came has the qualities of the sea. From sea we come and be/come.

Feet, toes and soles connect to the soil; the skin feels the wind; and the sternum opens to sky and knows expanse. Even our voices our inextricably linked to breath. Language is oral, and writing is hearkened back to the organic connection of blood to ink. The creation moves in a dance alongside us as human beings. The breathing, pulsing, gentle and harsh influx of weather is always moving and changing our planet and our lives. At the center of site-specific work is the daily practice of walking, dancing, moving in the natural world. This practice of physicality slows one down to sense the world within and without from a different dimension. In my walks by the sea, and in particular the Port Moody Burrard Inlet, outside Vancouver, British Columbia, where I have performed “Inlet Prayers,” I have roamed this path where the ocean meets land and birthed a collection of poems and performances. The practice of walking calls one to a deep listening, which infuses my commitment to attend to the lived curriculum. This is the geographic area where I raised my children, where I walked the curves of the inlet every day with my dog for decades. This walking became deeply connected to my spiritual practice and my writing practice. The herons, cedar, eagles and winding paths became my teachers; I was in the country of heron and seagull lessons. Each season unfolded its undeniable beauty, even in inclement weather. The rains were a main meal, and the mist and moisture were the classroom of my existence. This walking eventually transformed to hearing the syllables and sentences that formed poems: my walking could not be contained, for creation became a partner in dance arising within me. My body was embraced at the edge of sea and I entered the earth as a libation. Walking and dancing became my litany: the invitation to see and hear again for the first time.

listening to place  
another way of seeing  
waits for our eyes

Performing or participating in site-specific work invites one to slow down, to develop a different relationship with time and rhythm. One has the opportunity to go from doing, to being and seeing the shades of green and hearing birdsong. I am mindful of John O'Donohue's (2004) words, "When we walk on the earth with reverence, beauty will decide to trust us. The rushed heart and the arrogant mind lack the gentleness and patience to enter that embrace. Beauty is mysterious, a slow presence who waits for the ready, expectant heart" (p. 24).

In the process of writing this piece, I had a bad break to my big toe and was invited into an organic slowing down—a slowdance. Echoing Bill's (2004) words, the autobiographical method asks us to slow down, to remember even re-enter the past, and to meditatively imagine the future (p. 4). I am slowed down to a snail's pace. From the rushing wind, walking at a brisk pace, going to and fro, and taking multiple forms of transportation in one day and dancing in between the tasks of life or at the edge of sea and land, I am invited into an altered time. A plastic boot contraption on my leg, which resembles Darth Vader's accessories, marks this time. I hobble around as best I can in the cool of the day to a place of slowness. The only reason I can participate in all the things I do is because of my mobility, which surely I have taken for granted most of my life. A break in the toe, a small bone in my body has precipitated a major lifestyle change, even if it is only for a month or two.

she slipped softly  
fell into another time  
limits are teachers

Inwardly, I wonder if I wanted an opportunity to slow down. Rushing or even living in the fast lane continues to wage war against my artist soul and urges a "getting done" attitude, a life of "doing" rather than "being." Now, I have been stopped in my tracks. Where am I going? Why do I continue to participate in this fast paced life, without seriously questioning its hazards? And what is my relationship to time? I often don't feel I have permission to go slow, except on one day on the weekend, when I really try to intentionally take a Sabbath, a gentler pace, and relish in the beauty of creation and slowness. I know it in my bones.

inhabiting place  
writing and walking landscapes  
sit and drink stillness

I just walked around half the Queen's park near my home, outside Vancouver, a beautiful old park with tall trees, magnolias and cherry blossoms hugging the outskirts and a rose garden beginning to take flight in the ground. The roses have not peeked their faces to the sky, but I walk the paths in the rose garden as a labyrinth, slowing down the steps, so that my big cast feels the asphalt on the ground and my green boot announces spring. I'm hardly getting exercise, which of course I'm really wanting, but I am *seeing* in a way I might not usually see. My sight and insight are enhanced, and I stop to rest three times on benches. I luxuriate in sitting to ponder the wind and day while my crutches lean against the bench. I am reminded of Rumi's (1995) poetry where he says, "Beauty surrounds us, but usually we need to be walking in a garden to know it" (p. 171). My enforced slowness has brought me to the garden.

practices which slow  
stop the rush of time steeped  
a blue afternoon

To not have a choice, to move slowly, is an entirely different enterprise. I am an East Coast girl at heart and live and accomplish a lot in an accelerated pace. This is not the gait of my soul. I literally have to be stopped and invited into another dimension of time in order to see how actually insane my life has become. There is a whole movement of slow; movement practices of *tai chi* or walking a labyrinth bring our bodies to a different sensation in time and space. But why should it take an accident or breaking my toe to be invited into what my soul longs for all along?

each part is holy  
marvel of moving bodies  
fracture of the toe

What I long for all along is to live more luxuriously in the sensate world. To linger in the smells and fragrances of each season and inhale their extravagance. We have heard it is good to take time to smell the roses, but what about the hyacinth and cedar, mulch and pine, crocuses and cyclamen, dirt and dandelions? Each day I am stopped and halted into living with creation in a different way, even though I live in a city, not a rural place. The other day as I awaited a taxi, I sat on the bench outside my condo and saw two eagles flying high, swirling around each other in a kind of elegance that old couples know whose love has washed over all the nooks and crannies of a weathered life. Those eagles call out to my heart, even in the heart of the city, signaling another calling to today's urgency. This is the urgency where light, wind, hope, and dreams stem. A slowdance of living. A slowdance of breathing. A slowdance of listening.

This slowdance is shifting my relationship to place. Place is deeply connected to the core of who I am, and it is centered in my relationship to the natural world—primarily to shorelines. I am still a daughter of the sea, raised by the curriculum of an island town. My first lessons were scavenging for discarded objects at the shore: seaglass and seaweed, driftwood and clamshells, and the possibility to harvest mussels and clams for supper. I was a child of the tides; the ebb and flow of high and low tide marked my days. As years passed, I understood just how potent it was to be raised as a child of the sea, and its force and palpability have come to me for years in my writing, teaching, and now performing by the sea. The sea was not only a metaphor to me, but it was where I came from. The sea was a mother to me, and I returned to it over and over again in the swells to be nurtured by her presence, sometimes rough and other times calm, but always moving, turning and returning to my relationship between the wind as artist and the sea as dancer. This call and response that was so evident in the ocean has become a landmark for me, or a seamark. I am wooed to its opening, and here feel grounded.

I realize I am a guest in this place, but a guest who feels at home. The ocean has a hospitality, kind yet fierce. Its destructive quality can never be ignored, yet its embrace is infinite. The play of wind on sea are my playmates and the soil for creation. Pinar (1994) has said so beautifully, “autobiographical studies are windows which permit us to see again that which we loved before, and in so doing, see more clearly what and whom we love in the present . . . and dancing our way until the morning dawns” (p. 267). My entrance to both site-specific dance rooted in the poetic and autobiography will keep me moving into the dawn and dusk of my life with fresh eyes.

earth bares the body  
gravity and levity  
salting our lives

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## 18 Layers of Internationalization and Poststructuralism

William F. Pinar and Curriculum Studies in Brazil

*Maria Luiza Süsssekind*

Drawing on several milestone scholarly articles and historical research, this chapter presents an overview of the debates within the history of curriculum studies in Brazil and how they relate to Pinar's work. To highlight his influence as theorist, and ambassador for Internationalization, I engaged in an *indiciário* reading (Ginzburg, 1989) as a methodology to search for clues, whispers, and glimpses within curricular thinking, weaving—in a historical but not in a linear perspective—Pinar's influence on the field in Brazil with the understanding of some particularities within Internationalization's dialogues and processes, as a kind of scavenger hunt doing a search for hidden layers. Two hidden layers of Pinar's influence upon Brazilian theorists are presented in this chapter: the ongoing dialogues (and silences) throughout the Internationalization movement, and the readings of poststructuralism through the trends of Derridaeanism and multiculturalism.

Since we have learned that “the term curriculum is many things to many people” (Aoki, 1980/2005, p. 94), it is understandable that Internationalization means the exchange of curriculum concepts and theories acknowledging subjectivity, historicity, and cosmopolitanism. To understand what curriculum theory in Brazil is, under Pinar's influence, my research was guided by the following questions: *What are William Pinar's influences in the field of curriculum studies in Brazil? What are the relevant historical and theoretical aspects that have framed William Pinar's complicated conversation with Brazilian curriculum scholars?*

That this conversation has been important to Pinar is unquestionable. In *Curriculum Studies in Brazil*, Pinar underlines the “significance of subjectivity in this dialogical process of internationalization by introducing the Brazilian participants” (2011, p. 3); yet this volume has not yet been translated into Portuguese. Nor has his *International Handbook of Curriculum Research* (2003) been translated, despite Pinar having invited four major Brazilian curriculum scholars (Antonio Flavio Moreira, Alice Lopes, Elizabeth Macedo, and Silvia Elizabeth de Moraes) to relate some of the history of the emergence and consolidation of the field and its changes in the 1990s, “as well as the federal curriculum reform.”

Moreira and Regina Leite Garcia were two of the earliest Brazilian scholars to respond to Pinar's advocacy of Internationalization. In Moreira and Garcia (2003), with contributors from Europe, the United States, Australia, and South America, they aim to present a deep and internationalized debate about uncertainties and challenges within the field, exploring themes such as globalization, difference, and progressivism. The book includes an article by Pinar a (not-so-good) translation of "The misguided education of the public in the United States," in which he argues for teachers as modern symbols and human beings with identity anxieties, historicity, and curricular knowledge—sometimes unacknowledged, sometimes demonized—in the context of historical gender discrimination, globalization, and neoliberal educational policies of standardization (Pinar, 2003, p. 143). Given the book's diversity of approaches, it seems clear that the interest in publicizing and debating within an international production, taking into consideration the demands of the Brazilian field, assumes a high-priority role in relation to this or that particular trend.

This book addresses the problem of the school as a corporation, and Pinar's chapter is a (not-so-good) translation of "The misguided education of the public in the United States." In this article, he bolsters his argument by referring to the role of society and parents—as well as students—in framing their identities. Also, he focuses on the significant shift in educational policy in the United States that has seen the commercialization of curricula and planning (p. 143), paralleling what was being experienced by Brazilian schoolteachers at that moment and which has continued to be the case. I have found, reading this chapter with my curriculum students, that it provides a good opportunity for them to grapple with ideas about teacher education, an understanding of neoliberalism, and the transformation of school systems all over the world in the last few years. It seemed to have been the right paper at the right moment (as argues Geertz about Khun's, 2001, p. 144)—however, it was not presented like that.

Silvia Elizabeth de Moraes—who studied with Pinar—introduces her book (2008) by presenting an overview of the debates about the relationship of curriculum and the approach to teachers' education concerned with interdisciplinarity, the debate about the national curriculum reform, and the subjects of the "new" curriculum. Pinar's chapter in the book is a good translation of his article "Study, Not Teaching: Shifting the Site of Education," which presents a discussion about rationality and which also critiques No Child Left Behind policies. It is clearly in tune with the debates in the late 2000s and thus fits well with the other chapters in the book. Although Moraes (2008) discusses school reform and Moreira and Garcia (2003) by their own self-admission have an allegiance to postcritical studies and cite queer studies as an important achievement in the field, none of these authors mentions Pinar's articles or highlights his influences in their introductions.

With many visits to Brazil, two international research projects with Brazilian scholars' participation (2003, 2011), and his encouragement of the

participation by Brazilian scholars as members of IAACS,<sup>1</sup> Pinar did much to direct international attention to Brazilian scholars and raise the profile of curricular studies within Brazil. However, as an author, William Pinar's influence has been at the level of a whisper. According to Moreira, Pinar's many significant publications have been poorly edited and rarely translated (Moreira, in Süsssekind, 2014).

If we do a casual Internet search, we will find that Pinar's Wikipedia page has not been translated into Portuguese. A short comparison, using Google, shows that the name "William F. Pinar" in English returns more than 99,000 results, around 16,000 in Chinese, but only 3 in Portuguese. When it comes to books published, another interesting comparison can be made: no book of Pinar's has been translated into Portuguese, but at least 5 books by every *other* theorist comparable in stature in the field's history have been. The very simple question for anyone who desires to understand the Internationalization in the field of curriculum studies is, Which debates and theories have seemed interesting to Brazilian scholars? And, for the publishers, Are positivism and critical theory so dominant as to silence others?

Yet this apparently "positivistic" voice makes clear that science—like art—is also a fiction.

(Pinar, 1994, p. 209)

One of the most important subjects in the field of education and curriculum, for at least the last fifty years, is the linkage between politics and education. Paulo Freire's example and influence since the early 1960s loom large, as he developed and inspired a large number of emancipatory experiences in politics concerning education and vice-versa, becoming *the* major reference. One could say a complicated conversation (Pinar, 2012) about experience was already quite alive in education theory circles in Brazil; however, it has always seemed much more important for the majority of Brazilian thinkers in the field of education, especially for the Gramscian and Marxist intelligentsia, to focus only on the economy, power, and social relationships.

Since 1988, with the enactment of a new democratic constitution, Brazil has been building a democratic state, although the country still struggles with huge social inequalities, frequently deprecating cultural miscegenation and diversity. For this reason, politics, identity, power, colonization, democracy and above all the economy have been major themes for curriculum scholars. In this context it is understandable that Marxist ideas would inspire social critiques and the critical theorists would dominate the field of curriculum for so long. For Pinar, the field in Brazil "is so theoretically sophisticated" that to know about it opens possibilities of "the provocation of a myriad exchanges, most of which will not occur in English or be published in North America but will be acknowledged" (2011, pp. 3–4). According to Kumar, Marxism is the most important theoretical influence in Brazilian curriculum studies as it not only frames the debates but also forces any

theory to contend with it (Kumar, 2011, p. 28) and even erases some of them from the scene.

In the wake of the emblematic works about the relationship between capitalism and education, an immense field of specific curricular discussion arrived late in Brazil—the mid 1980s—but made an immediate impact, notably by the hands of Moreira and Tomaz Tadeu da Silva. For more than ten years, these two precursor scholars stood out because of their synthesis, which updated the curriculum field in relation to that which had been produced abroad, while seeking dialogue with the specificities of our educational system. Their theoretical scenario frames this layered story and inspires the challenge of telling it. They published two books that became emblematic: *Curriculum, Culture and Society* (1994) and *Contested Territories: The Curriculum and New Political and Cultural Maps* (1995). Both books point out the supremacy of critical theory and, in a sense, set the tone for the field's debates during the 1980s and 1990s.

Silva (1999) upon publication instantly became one of the basal references for novitiates in the fields of curriculum and teacher education with its classification of curricular thinking in three big trends—traditional theories, critical theories, and postcritical theories—a classification that became a paradigm for curriculum studies in Brazil. It presents critical theory as a better way—or even the only way—to understand *curriculum* facing the challenges of the 1970s, certainly, but also beyond. At that time, the main authors in the field were a group of scholars who understood curriculum as a dialogue with culture, power, and politics; accordingly, Silva justifies the silencing of others' *not-so-important theories*. He points out that theories are worldviews, but one is better than *the others* (1999, p. 3). Referring to the Reconceptualization in the United States, he explains that the consequence of confronting “traditional curricular thought” sets up an antagonism between those concerned with criticizing the established school and curricula and *others* (obviously preferring the role of economy, power, and politics).

Moreira (2007) uses Silva's classification, noting the dominance of critical theory during the 1980s and the 1990s, when the field was being consolidated. With regard to the influence of North American debates on the “new” themes raised by a poststructuralist approach to curricular ideas, he criticizes the Reconceptualization movement in the United States for rejecting curriculum as prescription; the nonpolitical character of the studies in the field; the lack of historicity; the excessive concern with improving school outcomes; and the indefiniteness of the field's object of study. All of those “rejections” and the subsequent polarization of curriculum studies between “politics and power” and “experience” were also prominent features of the field back then, since Brazilian scholars have usually drunk more from the font of the Europeans than from that of the Americans. Besides the huge influence of the Frankfurt School, French Everyday Life sociology influenced many authors and has gained space in the curriculum scene. Interestingly, the reconceptualist neo-Marxist trend is the strongest influence in the



field and some reconceptualist authors—but not Pinar—were followed. The later dialogue with the more humanist, non-Marxist tendencies in Reconceptualization opened a wide space for post-structuralism's questionings and for “new” authors. But again, Pinar was not cited.

Mapping the field at the end of the 1990s and investigating the notions of curriculum in academic articles, Moreira (2001) remarks on the huge influence of *multiculturalism* on the debates about curriculum and racial relations; cultural diversity; gender; curriculum policies; and teacher education. He identifies only one author as a major influence on the field (p. 73)—it is not Pinar—and underlines his disquietude with the secondary role of “social classes” as a potential subject for curricular studies (p. 72). Moreira admits that the borrowings, emphases, and omissions in the history of the theories and the field itself are questions that may have many answers. Some of those answers probably derive from one of his own questions: “Who are the beneficiaries of the theoretical debates?” (Moreira, 2002, p. 72). Clearly, internationalization, in the field of Brazilian curricular studies, is a search for hidden layers.

By understanding this hiddenness to be layers of voices, I find Moreira declaring that, for him, the field's *raison d'être* means that social class absolutely cannot be overlooked when it comes to debating curriculum in a country with much inequality (2002, p. 93). Arguing against autobiography, Silva does cite Pinar, but only as an author whose work is more related to teachers' education curricula than to the debate on curricular theory (1999, p. 44). There is, however, no reference to Pinar's writings when Silva presents the theoretical “progress” of the field in a linear way (1999). And there is no reference to Pinar when Silva discusses racism and gender as rising themes in the field (1999).

*Creating Curriculum within Everyday Life* (Alves 2001) can be considered a watershed book in the field. Talking with teachers, writing as a conversation among teachers, Nilda Alves, Elizabeth Macedo, Inês Barbosa de Oliveira, and Luiz Carlos Manhães draw up an epistemological proposal, weaving phrases like *nets to knowledge* and *curriculum to creation*. Dialoguing with the criticals, the liberals, and the naïves, but going much further, they confront the hegemony of the paradigms, inaugurating something like a criticism of the critique. They use cunning words and discuss not just poststructuralist notions but deconstructive strategies to the epistemological and methodological doing of curricula research and theorizing within the curriculum field. Consequently, confrontation with the critical theorists and the dominant scientific positivistic paradigm was inevitable, but again, there isn't any mention of Pinar, although they openly dialogue with some of “Pinar's rivals.” Later (in 2011), Alves, Macedo, and Oliveira among others were published in English as part of Pinar's Internationalization project in the book *Curriculum Studies in Brazil: Intellectual Histories, Present Circumstances*.

After a fruitful cooperation with Moreira during the early 2000s, Macedo developed her own theory about policies, curriculum, and practices, building the concept of “curriculum as enunciation” (Pinar, 2011, p. 16).

In 2007, she studied with Pinar; subsequently she dialogued with Pinar's ideas and even reviewed a few translations of Pinar's articles for Brazilian journals. Currently, she is one of the leading figures in Brazil that questions "the usual separation between formal curriculum and curriculum in action" (Lopes & Macedo, 2011, p. 2).

Offering sparse clues to unhide the poststructuralist layer, Alice Lopes, who works frequently with Macedo (e.g., Lopes & Macedo, 2011), gives us a solid assessment of the field's advancement in Brazil and the current debates:

Investigations into curriculum practices have always had great prominence in the curriculum field, to the point where the notion of curriculum in action has become one of the most powerful concepts in curriculum theory. From the phenomenological approaches, through the work of Paulo Freire and the concept of *currere* by William Pinar, to the most current discussions that focus on school daily life and teaching knowledge, curriculum practice is based on questioning the prescriptive approaches to curriculum.

(Lopes & Macedo, 2011, p. 1)

Lopes (2013) argues that the debates between critical and postcritical scholars persist, and that the former's theoretical outlook still occupies a prominent position among the several perspectives of postcriticism. She contextualizes the state of the field in the 2000s by noting that critical studies are still in *vogue* and remarks on the influence that Silva's translations and articles have had on establishing the canons. For her, Silva, as a curriculum theorist, translator, publisher, and an intellectual, deeply concerned with politics, has succeeded in tilting the field in favor of the critical theorists (2013). Confining herself to poststructuralism, Lopes uses Derrida's concept of "difference" to discuss curriculum theory and curriculum policies (2013, p. 13). However, without mentioning Pinar's work or debates in the field, she weaves a (not so?) hidden layer of conversation about the *Derridian* (Pinar, 1994, p. 216) possibilities for understanding curriculum.

In 2012, I interviewed Bill Pinar for the book *Who Is William F. Pinar* released in Brazil recently. It is an introduction to Pinar's work. Back then, I asked if he agreed that he had changed the paradigm of curriculum when he exchanged the definition from a noun to a verb—by acknowledging the role of experience and the deepness of the self. Bill's answer to my question was, "No, they won." Power still is a dominant key in the field of curriculum studies. In his beautiful narrative about nomad meanings of curriculum lies the richness of the Reconceptualization movement affecting and being affected by everything around politics, culture(s), theories, aesthetics, ethics, and the architecture of the self:

So, I was living with a group of people in Rochester, and every night, drinking beer and talking and laughing and listening to music and I remember being on the kitchen table, writing "Currere," the '75

piece. And the buzz going around and people coming down and—I don't think that scene itself was the inspiration, but certainly there was a kind of sense of real life and of people, mostly playing but also sometimes seriously grappling with what it meant to be alive at that moment, and in that place, and with each other. And we were all kind of defeated student revolutionaries getting old, and in our twenties and the site had really shifted from the streets to really the psyche, and social relationships, and gender was beginning to happen then. So it seemed almost obvious that a course of study had to do with *the experience*. And “to run,” not in the sense of “perform,” obviously, but to undergo what was happening, rather than try to make something happen. We kept feeling that we wanted, you know, to experience more.

(Pinar, 2014)

In a sense, Bill's memory brought up the same questioning of the paradigm of curriculum that allowed Paulo Freire to elaborate his ideas. Despite their deep differences in dealing with the future, politics, and the use of the social as category, both Freire and Pinar open doors to current studies within the field towards acknowledging teachers' work as creation and recognizing historicity and subjectivity within curriculum. These are some of the hidden layers of Pinar's influence in Brazil. But there are other layers still to be revealed.

## Note

- 1 IACCS—International Association for Advancement of Curriculum Studies.

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# 19 William Pinar's Contribution to Our Understanding of Sex, Gender and Curriculum

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## Major Contributions

In 1981, William Pinar introduced what would become the central theme of his future work on masculinity and, eventually, his analysis of the gender of racial politics. That theme concerns the fundamental centrality to male identity of a disavowed desire for and erotic connection to the father and other men, and a disavowed identification with the maternal and other women, disavowals that have their origin in pre-oedipal family configurations and the complex formation of the unconscious.

In the decades following the publication of that essay, Pinar, demonstrating an astonishing breadth of interdisciplinary knowledge, has elaborated on and complicated that theme. Supplementing object-relations theory with Lacanian theory and grounding his analyses in history, biography, and, more generally, in the humanities, he has offered genealogies of masculinity (2001) and sexuality (2006b), and their connection to whiteness (2006a), cosmopolitanism (2009) and the structuring dynamics of race in the United States (2001).

In 2001, Pinar explored “the psychosexual structure and historical character of whiteness that renders it so aggressive, so tortured, so interested in subjugation” (p. 19). In that work, he connected men’s, particularly white men’s repressed homosexuality to racialized systems of oppression, racial violence and white supremacy. It is an astonishing work that forces white men to face the centuries’ long horror of racism in the United States and to confront the racialized and gendered “nightmare of the present.”

Never content to simply describe that nightmare, Pinar urged men to take action. He has always insisted that we men, particularly we white men, “must confront [our] own manhood . . . historically, socially, racially, in terms of class and culture” (2001, p. 1), so that “hegemonic male subjectivity [can] be brought to ruin” (2001, p. 30) and so that we can form “a public sphere in education” and resuscitate “the progressive project in gendered and racialized terms, in which we understand that self-realization and democratization are inevitably intertwined” (2001, p. 29). It is a project he believes can be taken up in the curriculum. It is a challenging project, however, particularly today when race, gender and sexuality are, as Roderick Ferguson (2012)

writes, increasingly “read . . . as an abstraction, divorced from historical contexts” (p. 105).

In some ways, perhaps Pinar’s greatest contribution to our understanding of how gender and sexuality intersect with and shape racial politics and our experience of education, has been his insistence that education make room to explore and articulate our coming to form as individuals who are shaped by and reflective of larger social, political, economic forces, but cannot be reduced to these. He has asked all of us, particularly heterosexual, white men, to explore and to study how our bodies and psyches have been scarred, formed and deformed by race, sexuality, gender and class and the impact that has had on others. He has called us to this project so that we might change ourselves and our situations. I want now to take up that call, as I address neoliberal education reform.

### **Neoliberalism**

In 2012, Shannon Winnubst notes that neoliberalism “is arguably one of the most frequently circulating terms in current academic and non-academic political conversations” (p. 80). While, as Winnubst reminds us, the 2011 Occupy Movement brought neoliberalism to public awareness, academics, including curriculum scholars, have been addressing the political and economic hegemony of neoliberalism for well over a decade. Much of that work, including Winnubst’s article, argues that neoliberalism does not so much advance a market society, although the market saturates the life world, as it initiates “an enterprise society” (Winnubst, p. 83). Consider as one example how schools of education and their deans must continually come up with ways to raise money and market themselves, and how professors, curricular and extra-curricular activities, and teachers are increasingly cast in terms of potential revenue streams.

As, “economic calculation becomes the mode of rationality for self-reflection and the barometer for individual success” (p. 84), ethical values of good and bad, or social values of normal/abnormal, are replaced by the market values of success/failure and by strategies of management. Within such a system the definitions of identity shift. As Winnubst argues, “[T]he demarcation . . . is not that of normativity/non-normativity: neoliberalism operates through the social rationality of success, not identity” (p. 86).

Consequently, the question of identity . . . is absorbed into this neoliberal grammar of success. One does not ask ‘who you are?’ in neoliberalism. Rather one asks, ‘how good you are at what you do? How successful are you?’”

(p. 86; italics in original)

The rationality of enterprise turns the question of identity into questions of success and vaporizes identity, itself, into a set of entrepreneurial skills or their lack.

While neoliberalism requires that human experience be rendered in terms of observable behaviors or skills so it can be measured, quantified, categorized, controlled and predicted and ultimately made fungible, that is, exchangeable like money, and profitable, the categories into which humans disappear have no depth or histories. They are simply human capital, de-contextualized social identities or data that can be managed, marketed and rendered fungible. What are we worth? How can we maximize profit and markets? How can we market ourselves? The education reforms of the last fifteen years have only accelerated the importation of neoliberalism's logics, practices and language into public education.

How can Pinar's remarkable body of work analyzing gender and sexuality, particularly masculinity, help us think about neoliberal education reforms and its hollowing out of identity? I want to approach this question in two ways. First, I argue that neoliberal education reformers act out the very misogynist, racist and heteropatriarchal attitudes that Pinar's work so incisively analyzes and challenges, but with one major difference. Education reformers do it under the cover of what Arne Duncan calls a new civil rights movement, in the guise of securing better education for females, with the promise of creating safe spaces for LGBTQ populations, with the announcement that differentiated and individualized learning is key, in the guise of a commitment to multicultural education, and with the mission to give teachers, predominantly women, professional status. Second, I suggest that male desire for sexual prowess and terror at its loss, and men's fixation on achieving orgasm as the goal of sex, fuel and shape a drive for measuring outcomes and wind up stunting or distorting sexuality and education.

We face in education today a disturbing paradox, captured by celebrity Kate Moss's comment. "The more they make me visible," she said, "the more invisible I become" (p. 95). In Christian Salmon's analysis of Moss's role as a neoliberal icon, he reads her statement as meaning that her own identity disappeared behind the one created by fashion. In terms of education, however, we can read her comment differently. The more education reformers talk about civil rights, saving children of color, ending the school-to-prison pipeline, including multicultural education in the curriculum, ensuring best practices that are sensitive to diverse students, professionalizing a predominantly female work force, protecting LGBTQ students and providing every student with equal educational opportunities, the more invisible race, class, gender and sexuality become. The actual real human beings who come together in classrooms everyday disappear, as do their own histories of racial, gender, sexual and class oppression, which their lives, in part, reflect.

But of course, they don't really disappear. They are invisible but palpable. Rampant sexual harassment and assaults, racism, and misogyny continue but out of sight. Inequalities exist but out of sight. So, for example, Secretary Duncan can say that education is the civil rights issue of our day, not mass incarceration, not the impoverishment of millions of African Americans, not police violence, not institutional racism or the failure to institute reparations

and certainly not segregation. These disappear. Because everyone is equal in the eyes of the standards, and every student can learn, diversity and individuality exist only as empty categories. As Jodi Malamed (2011) writes, within neoliberal-multicultural discourse race has been abstracted into “difference” (p. 43) and equality is simply equality among abstractions whose success, that is employability, is measured by test scores. But in the very name of equality, black and brown bodies, as well as female teachers’ bodies, are placed under surveillance, disciplined, and denied resources.

How do we make sense of such abstraction? Pinar (1979) wrote:

What is problematic about this reduction of concrete beings to an idea is the distortion of human life it sustains. . . . As ideas become more “real” than concrete human beings, the capacity to sacrifice the latter for the sake of the former is more possible and likely.

(p. 104)

In that article, Pinar was attacking the Marxists for their erasure of the individual who disappears into categories culled from the learning sciences that reduce knowledge to information and students to learners and cognitive skills. They disappear into academic, socio-psychological categories and into the categories of an innocuous multiculturalism that substitutes cultural and social identities for redistributive justice and historical knowledge. They disappear into data or into winners or losers or into entrepreneurs. The very racial, gender and sexual inequities one might think education should address, because they form and deform our students and ourselves, are vanished into the neutral, apparently meritocratic rhetoric of accountability and standards.

And the patriarchal, straight, white—although as James Baldwin and Jean Genet pointed out, not necessarily in terms of skin color—male ego disappears as well, not into the figure of the racist, sexist homophobe, nor into the figure of universal sovereign consciousness, not into a person at all, but into the neutral, rational, efficient, expertise backed by scientifically based research. Such expertise has all the taint of individual subjectivity, politics, race, gender, sexuality, evacuated. These are projected onto those opposed to education reform—unions—and those deemed most in need of reform—teachers and teacher educators.

It is not surprising that education reformers refer to teacher unions in terms once reserved for blacks and women. Scott Walker has referred to unionized teachers as “lazy, parasitical, shiftless, violent and slobby” (quoted in Melamed, p. 224). Education reformers have said unionized teachers were “out of control,” “not realistic,” “narcissistic,” “self-indulgent.” The out-of-control female body of teacher education will be tamed by the education experts. Forced to apply the lash of protocols championed by Doug Lemov, unruly teachers will, in imposing the techniques on their students, themselves become drained of all subjectivity. “Sit up straight, eyes on me, track



me, speak in unison, follow my hand signals!" Who is really being trained here? And who are the individuals insisting teachers employ such "management techniques"? Most often they are men, and the ones who most often use these training devices are women. Women, who, at least in the case of Teach for America and the New York Teaching Fellows, are predominantly white and have been lured by advertisements that appeal to a missionary impulse by telling them they can change a life or lives.

Enticed by working with poor kids of color, they will go into schools where, under the watchful eye of accountability systems and often male administrators, they will, in the name of emancipation, discipline and civilize black, brown and immigrant students. Of course it's not phrased as "civilize." It's phrased as getting students "college and career ready," but in reality, male and female students of color will be subjected to classification, sorting and preparation for jobs that are almost all in the *service* sector. Predominantly white women, surrogates for the men behind education reform, will prepare students to take tests, but certainly not invite students to consider the complicated histories of race, sexuality, class and gender that shape the education delivered or students' and teachers' lives. Nor will they be charged with helping students recover their own evolving subjectivities by thinking about the sexual identities sold to them by the media.

And what of the gay and lesbian teachers and students? As long as they embrace the common core or corps, whether the marine corps or the social body, as long as they forget their histories and ask only for marriage and bourgeois rights and assimilate into the common corps, there will be a place for them. As Julie Bindel, an activist feminist lesbian, writes (2014), "We have been sold a dream of marriage, babies, and conventionality at a huge cost to our radical potential, and the profits will not go to our freedom and liberation."

Education reformers want to create schools safe for LGBTQ populations by effacing their sexuality and the history of gender and sexual oppression, and, in the case of universities, by using re-articulated versions of these to fulfill metrics and raise funds. As Lisa Duggan (2003) pointed out, the discourse of equality "is proffered as new window dressing for a broad, multi-issue neoliberalism" (p. 65). Attacks on LGBTQ students occur with horrifying frequency, but those students themselves disappear into discourses of inclusivity, diversity and difference that evacuate queer, gay and lesbian history and politics.

And for those young teachers entering teaching? Well, in the name of professionalization, they are being stripped of autonomy, academic freedom, and even subjectivity. In edTPA, we have an assessment that forces a predominantly female teaching body of teachers to expose itself for the video camera, to perform for and to be evaluated by a predominantly male, white gaze. When at a recent conference on edTPA, I asked a defender of the assessment why she was so wedded to it, she replied, "We must prove we

are doing a good job?” Prove to whom? Here, Pinar’s description of ocular-centrism comes in handy.

“In the West,” Pinar (2006a) writes, “the ‘hegemony of vision’ in the modern world is associated . . . with racism and misogyny” (p. 169), but, he goes on, that vision is “not inherently anything” (p. 169). It is neither male nor female, neither gay nor straight, neither white nor black. Rather the historical, social and psychic position of men and women, whites and blacks transforms vision such that women and blacks emerge as objects of the white male gaze. “Invisible to itself, whiteness assumes that its observations of the ‘other’ constitutes ‘reality,’ when in fact it [is] seeing its dissociated ‘self’ in [its] fantasies” (p. 172). Further, “Invisible to itself . . . heteronormative masculinity assumes that its observations of ‘blacks,’ ‘women,’ and ‘gays’ are self-evident” (p. 172). The white, male gaze, institutionalized in various modes of surveillance, defends against its own vulnerability and the desire for the father, perhaps fantasized as all powerful and exerting control over an intrusive mother, and defends against associations with the fluid, potentially engulfing and definitely unruly relationship with the mother. Do not education reformers imagine a world divided between order and disorder, as neoliberal guru Thomas Friedman (2014) expressed? Is it not education reformers who present education in terms of control and loss of control? Who are terrified of chaos? Is it not education reformers who worry we/they do not get a “big enough bang for the buck,” do not measure up?

### Keeping Those Scores Up

Of course, we live in the era of measurement. I think it worthwhile, given the invitation Bill Pinar’s work extends, to consider the parallel between high stakes testing and what several writers (Jagose, Halberstam) have described as the male obsession with orgasm. I suggest that views of sex and orgasm in many ways parallel our views of education and learning and may be intimately tied to them. In elaborating on this suggestion, I want to keep to Pinar’s focus on the male psyche.

According to Annamarie Jagose (2013), over the last several decades, the criterion for successful sex has become successful orgasm. To take one example, the website Beautiful Agony.com, which “began as an experiment, to test a theory that eroticism in human imagery lies not in the body, but in the face,” pays homage to the belief that orgasm is the ultimate goal and measure of good sex. It also wants to show orgasm itself, or, in other words, to prove or capture its existence, in this case by showing its literal face. Thus participants are invited to submit videos of themselves in the throes of “coming.”

As the measure of sexual satisfaction, orgasm has, over the last several decades, according to Jagose, replaced reproduction, emerged in the much older space constituted by *ars erotica*, and come to form the previously ignored

space of women's sexual pleasure. Orgasm has emerged as a normalized, self-evident event. Jagose writes

The specification of the orgasm as a simple, natural, and more or less unmediated physiological phenomenon—"just reflex"—... is commonplace to a range of discourses, from the sociobiological to the sexological, that tend to presume that the material facticity of the body and its biological functions trump interpretation and its inevitable and partisan attachment to the subjective and the ideological.

(p. 21)

Not everyone considers orgasm such an unmediated and ideologically pure biological or reflexive experience. In fact, in the 1970s, both Gilles Deleuze and Michel Foucault theorized the orgasm as being a block to or disciplining of either desire, in Deleuze's sense of that term, or pleasure, in Foucault's sense of that term, and both saw its centrality to sex as being in the service of social oppression. As Jagose, writes, "In linking orgasm to the normalizing and striating strategies of modern power, in characterizing it as an effect of the regulation and rigidification of sexuality, Foucault and Deleuze explicitly exclude orgasm from any repertoire of progressive practices" (p. 6). For Jagose, orgasm has become "the standard unit of measurement for sexuality, producing as a consequence, the normative sexual subject" (p. 8). Thus, Jagose argues against any move to locate within orgasm "the potential for political transformation or liberationist understanding of power" (p. 10) because it is already so domesticated within the sex/gender system, and because its potential for self-shattering does not imply the reconstitution of a progressive self.

Jagose's intent, at least as I read it, is to complicate our understanding of sex and orgasm. I don't read her as simply saying that there are as many experiences of sex and orgasm and as many sexualities as there are individuals and that all these are disciplined into narrow categories that constitute a system into which we are interpellated. Rather, she is arguing that "the female's orgasmic excitement can never be objectively measured" (p. 142) and that the male focus on verifiable orgasms either in ejaculation or in the visual or auditory demonstration of the female's exteriorization of inner experience, limits, stunts and enslaves men to particular fantasies of endpoints and control.

What does all this talk of orgasm and sex have to do with learning and education? Clearly, the central drive of education reform seeks outcomes, the culminating score on the test or the visible display that the student has "learned." All the excitement of these reformers centers on the final performance of learning. Like Kinsey's measurements of orgasm, the battery of tests measures whether students have achieved success. As Jagose writes about Kinsey, "... unless it ends in orgasm, sexual activity [for Kinsey] does not count, in the literal statistical sense, as an event" (p. 29). Such

“a behaviorist focus on sexual practice singles out orgasm as its rationalized unit of calculation and, increasingly, therapeutic intervention” (p. 37). It doesn’t exist if it can’t be measured. Sound familiar? Learning is as tied up with measurement as orgasm.

Just as in male gay or straight porn, what Jagose describes as the “signature shot of much hard-core pornography” (p. 146) or the “money shot” is the ejaculation, in a predominantly male world of education reform, education is turned into education porn with the “money shot” being the test score. It is quite literally the *money* shot, given the corporate dollars to be made. And so we have the picture of predominantly female teachers, working hard to bring off their students’ success for the male gaze of education reformers. And we only know if learning has occurred if the students can achieve that right score.

I am arguing that we men have assumed as natural a focus on sexual outcome or orgasm and have normalized the intense striving for particular goals in education that can be rendered visible, measurable and controllable. The normative educational subject is the quantifiable learner. I am arguing that the male desire for sexual prowess and terror at its loss, a desire and terror shaped and intensified by the cultural emphasis on orgasm, fuels and shapes a drive for measuring learning outcomes and winds up stunting or distorting both sexuality and education.

Just as straight men want to capture, prove, quantify that elusive female orgasm, just as they rush to achieve what is billed as the end point of sex, so education reformers want to capture, prove, quantify learning. The more focused on outcomes and performance education is, the more deformed education becomes. Appearance and performance are all that matters. There are only winners and losers.

## **And the Future?**

It’s a dismal picture, but not a fated one. Pinar’s work offers us opportunities, as he once wrote (1998) to “work toward a future that is hardly visible, still not on the horizon” (p. 6). Such work in part involves the recuperation of lost histories and study of our own lives in terms of those histories. Certainly we must study older, often buried, radical discourses and events and re-think them without romanticizing them. We might look anew at the Black Panthers, Queer Nation, the Young Lords, Bread and Roses, Red Stockings, the Combahee River Collective, and Act Up. These efforts as social transformation may offer a vocabulary and aspirations. But more important, Pinar’s work reminds us that we need to continually and courageously reflect on our own lives as they unfold. It’s so easy to settle into denial or complacency. If, as Bill has so often described, sexuality and gender are unstable, mercurial and disruptive, and if we pay attention to his call, we must pay attention to the endless ways gender and sexuality shimmer through our lives. Whenever they congeal, we need to revolt or take notice. We have much to thank Bill Pinar for and we have good reason to heed his call.

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## 20 Complexities of the Complicated Conversation

*Donna Trueit*

### Introduction

Bill Doll had just finished his presentation about curriculum and dynamical self-organizing systems (complexity theory) at the IAACS conference in Finland, 2006. Bill Doll invited participants to enter into a discussion, at which time Bill Pinar responded: “Is there any place for subjectivity in complexity theory? Surely, Bill, individuals matter . . .?” It would be natural for Pinar to pose such a question. He has stated that “the primacy of subjectivity in education is the throughline in my ongoing study” (2009, p. x). Subjectivity is one of the main themes running through the prodigious body of intellectual work he has contributed to the academic field of curriculum studies.

I have pondered Pinar’s question to Doll since that time in Finland because it is similar to one that I and others ask concerning the relevance of complexity theory for curriculum studies. It is an important question, one that sits at the heart of timeless questions about the relation of parts to wholes, individuals to cultures, the one to the many, and the organization of things. It is the question of the relation of self and other(s). Ultimately our understanding of *relations* affects our ideas about change and our beliefs in our abilities as individuals to affect systemic change.

It is in Pinar’s more recent development of *subjectivity* (2009), now nested within his concept of *cosmopolitanism* (and *internationalization*), that I find connections to complexity theory; not the restricted complexity that Bill Doll was referring to in his Finland talk, but rather, Humberto Maturana’s biological complexity which has greater relevance, I find, for thinking about human systems. It is to Maturana that Edgar Morin turns for his idea of generalized complexity (seen in relation to restricted complexity) and which Morin uses to support his argument that in today’s world educators need to promote complex thinking.<sup>1</sup> Restricted complexity refers to the science of mathematical modeling that, for example, predicts traffic patterns and anticipates economic futures. Generalized complexity, on the other hand, is “epistemological,” requiring a paradigmatic rethinking. Three linked principles, Morin suggests, might guide that shift; briefly, a principle of organizational

recursion, a dialogic principle, and a holographic principle (Morin 2008, 2006). Says Morin (2006, p. 6),

[C]omplexity requires that one tries to comprehend the relations between the whole and the parts. The knowledge of the parts is not enough, the knowledge of the whole as a whole is not enough, if one ignores its parts; one is thus brought to make a come and go loop to gather the knowledge of the whole and its parts. Thus, the principle of reduction [which guides scientism] is substituted by a principle that conceives the relation of whole-part implication.

One “implication” following from the dominance of the principle of reduction is, in Pinar’s terms, “the crime of collectivism” and “the obliteration of the particular” (2009, p. 10), which he seeks to redress not through a simple inversion, but rather, I suggest, by demonstrating through the use of three exemplars (Jane Addams, Laura Bragg, and Pier Paolo Pasolini), the intellectual contributions made possible through (their) passionate subjective engagement with the world.

In this chapter, I want to highlight the dynamical relational processes of thinking involved in Pinar’s cosmopolitan education, referring to his concepts of subjectivity, cosmopolitanism, and internationalization, and make connections to complexity by pointing to Morin’s three principles of complexity, particularly in the epistemological shift of Jane Addams. Without turning Bill Pinar into a complexity theorist, I suggest that his “complicated” conversation might be precisely what makes a cosmopolitan education more than simply complicated.

I focus on two OED (online) meanings of *relation* as: “An attribute denoting or concept *expressing* a connection, correspondence, or contrast between different things; a particular way in which one thing or idea is connected or associated with another or others; a link, a correlation” (emphasis added); and perhaps as important, relation is a narration; “The *action* of giving an account of something; narration, report. To recount, narrate, give an account of (actions, events, facts, etc.)” (emphasis added). It is the action of narrating, expressing in words, making connections, distinctions, and correspondence that I am emphasizing here and which I suggest is what makes complicated conversation key to complex thinking.

### **Nested Relations: Subjectivity, Cosmopolitanism, Internationalization**

The subject and the social, the collective and the particular are a few of the juxtaposed words Pinar uses referring to the part/whole elements of a cosmopolitan education. What Pinar proposes—what he has always known—is that helping students to think relationally should be the primary goal of

education. In 1975, Pinar described *currere* (developed with Madeline Gru-met) this way:

[T]he method is the self-conscious conceptualization of the temporal, and . . . it is the viewing of what is conceptualized through time. So it is that we hope to explore the complex relation between the temporal and the conceptual. In doing so we disclose their relation to the Self in its evolution and education.

(p. 2, paper presented at AERA)

Even in those early days, Pinar noted the “complex relation” between self, knowledge (the conceptual) and history (temporality). *Currere* is a process of autobiographical reflection through which one comes to understand oneself better in relation to the forces and events that have influenced one’s being, recognizing how past experiences shape one’s present, even affecting future experiences: the relation of the student to one’s self and to one’s culture, specifically, in regard to one’s education.

In 1975, Pinar was referring to “the researcher” and “the subject,” using terms acceptable to an academic community that still viewed educational research in a particular way, still sought to separate subject and object (an effort that complexity theory addresses by acknowledging “researcher effect” and benefit of reflexivity). The researcher as the subject (and object!) of inquiry was not yet. Now however, *subjectivity* as “the inner life, the lived sense of ‘self’” (2009, p. 3) in educational research seems natural and illustrates Pinar’s point about the temporality of knowledge even as it relates to ourselves. Subjectivity (and its method of *currere*) is nestled at the heart of a cosmopolitan education.

### ***Cosmopolitanism***

Reconceived by Pinar (2009), the concept of *cosmopolitanism* advances his richly developed ideas about education necessary for a sustainable future “in our current diversified, globalized, technologically oriented era . . . [where] reduction as a habit of thought is no longer as useful as it once was” (Doll & Trueit, 2012, p. 172). In fact, as I read Pinar’s ideas about cosmopolitanism, written in response to his appraisal of the present nightmare, “the problem of [his] life and flesh,” where structures of subjectivity (spirituality, sexuality and sustainability) are fractured, I think of the pragmatism of Peirce, Addams and Dewey rewritten for today’s world circumstances. What he is able to articulate better than most—perhaps all—of the early pragmatists is the dynamic process of thought necessary to resuscitate democracy and to act responsibly toward the biosphere; that is, to be able to think and act *simultaneously* for oneself and for the world, “simultaneously social and subjective” (p. 63), negotiating public and private realms. Pinar’s (2009) cosmopolitanism



involves a new humanism—an “ethico-political stance” that “acknowledges species’ interrelatedness and embeddedness in the biosphere while affirming the sacredness of the individual” (p. 150); his development of subjective reconstruction; and *worldliness* as the “subjective supplement to cosmopolitanism,” (p. 4). Pinar’s worldliness, which involves a passionate engagement—“a love of this world . . . enables experience of the spiritual” (p. 7). It is the relational dynamism of worldliness on which I focus. This innovation, a nuance to his previous descriptions of subjectivity, conceptually creates permeable subjective boundaries, worldliness being “a state of being between the local and the global, simultaneously self engaged and worldly wise” (p. 4), a both/and state, neither neglecting nor indulging subjectivity, while being open to the world.

### ***Internationalization***

*Internationalization* is more than the IAACS conferences held every three years in different continents, so far, Asia (China), Europe (Finland), Africa (South Africa), South America (Brazil), and North America (Canada). *Internationalization* refers as well to an extensive Canada Research Council curriculum studies project initiated in 2005 by Pinar establishing a network of curriculum scholars in over forty countries, interviewing and publishing in-depth conversations between and among leading curriculum scholars in Brazil, China, India, Mexico, and South Africa. It is an intellectual movement that aspires to support ongoing conversations between and among scholars internationally as they seek a deeper, richer, more fully nuanced understanding of curriculum in their own settings. Daniel Tröhler describes internationalization as “international discussion among scholars who are historically self-aware of their own traditions, not in order to defend them, but—on the contrary—to allow different or foreign arguments to be understood” (Tröhler, in Pinar, 2009, p. 159, no. 12). Internationalization might also be thought of as an existing network of possibilities, opportunities to learn from others about their situations and understandings of curriculum far beyond one’s own realm of experience.

### ***Relations Between and Among: The Come and Go Loop***

I have described Pinar’s concepts—subjectivity, cosmopolitanism, and internationalization—as *nested*, regarding them relationally in this sense: I see individuals engaged in ever-changing subjective realities; being situated and actively engaged in and affected by ever-changing cultures; and having influence in, being influenced by, the ever-changing biosphere and internationalized world. It is a figuration of the one individual in relation to itself and to many others, a schematic, snapshot view which is like the first part of the definition of *relation* that I referred to above: “an attribute denoting or concept expressing a connection, correspondence, or contrast between different

things; a particular way in which one thing or idea is connected or associated with another or others" (OED). This view, however, obscures dynamical processes occurring, due to the flow of information through this system—yes, it *is* a system—which leads to its continual reorganization, therefore, a dynamical, self-organizing system. It is the second aspect of the definition of *relation*, "to recount, narrate, give an account of . . ." that is, the complicated conversation, that initiates the "come and go loop to gather the knowledge of the whole and its parts" (Morin, 2006, p. 6), the principle of organizational recursion, that, I suggest, allows the individual to effect change (both internally and externally) in the system of which it is a part. The narration, account, or conversation that initiates the complexity of old-fashioned pragmatism, democracy—or that a cosmopolitan education involves—depends upon both: an individual *and* his or her subjective experiences.

What is *experience*? Pinar draws on Martin Jay's *Songs of Experience*:

Experience is at the nodal point of the intersection between public language and private subjectivity, between expressible commonalities and the ineffability of the individual interior, . . . inevitably acquired through an encounter with otherness.

(Jay, in Pinar 2009, p. 168)

This statement points to the simultaneous nature of being both individual (the one) and of the common (the many), private and public, and the necessary articulation of being, in whatever form it should take; for the raw, sensory data of experience becoming, in John Dewey's opinion, *an* experience. Bringing thoughts to expression—so very important to pragmatists—spoken, written, or aesthetic forms, are "trans-actions" (John Dewey), moving across or beyond subjective bounds, that the private is made known even if simply to oneself, through reflection. *Experience* is an experience of some thing or other; worldly experience, studied and reflected upon, figures prominently in a cosmopolitan education; and this *worldliness* is "a state of being *expressed* through individuated aesthetic and intellectual forms" (p. 152, emphasis added).

Worldliness, Pinar's link between private and public, refers to the individual's being and its expression; but human beings are social animals. This sociality is conducted in and through conversation, the etymological roots of which are *conversation* (n.) mid-14c., "living together, having dealings with others," also "manner of conducting oneself in the world," "act of living with," noun of action from past participle stem of *conversari* "to live with, keep company with," literally "turn about with."<sup>2</sup> In the dictionary, *conversation* is a noun referring to the "action of living or having one's being in a place or among persons." "Converse, 1. intr. To move about, have one's being, live, dwell in (on, upon) a place, among (with) people, etc. Obs. . . . 3. To be engaged in; to have to do with (a thing); to deal with, be familiar or conversant with . . . to converse with books" (OED).

Importantly, the definitions of conversation I have highlighted imply the doing of conversing, that is, the *experience* of being in the world *with others*. Conversation occurs in the presence of others, it is feedback for one's thoughts, expression, and being-in-the-world. Ironically, considering how we usually think about conversation, words need not be spoken. One needs to be conscious of the other, attuned to the situation and engaged with, *being* in the "turn about" dance. It is a relational flow of information between and among parts of the system, a flow between private and public and biospheric realms, recursively, back and around; and if one looks not at objects but rather at dynamical relations, or "flow" within a system, it is flow—*conversation*—that makes individual boundaries seem permeable. When Pinar speaks of worldliness as passages between subjective and social, reciprocal and responsive relations, and "simultaneously self engaged and worldly wise" (p. 4), I think of conversation and make connections to Morin's come and go flow of knowledge (the principle of organizational recursion).

### **Jane Addams, Cosmopolitanism and Complexity**

While Pinar privileges the particular, I think a case can be made—is made by him, in fact—about the complexity of relations apparent in Jane Addams' thought, bringing the particular into relation with the abstract. In this final section, I refer to the epistemological shift in Addams' thinking due to her cosmopolitan education involving worldly engagement, study, and reflection, which I suggests relates to Morin's complex thinking.

#### ***Jane Addams' Epistemological Shift***

Jane Addams was a remarkable woman whose life and achievements are well documented. Her influence in her own time, and since, is felt in such diverse areas as American pragmatist philosophy, public education, sociology, and (what would now be termed) ethics of care, feminist theory, and social justice. Her intellectual development occurred as spiritual beliefs were challenged by Darwin's theory of evolution; a male-normed, male-dominated society was challenged by feminism; and Hegelian reasoning—thesis, antithesis, synthesis—was questioned by those who posited the invaluable contribution of experience and intuition in scientific and creative thought. In this context Addams emerged as an independent thinker and she attributes a major change in her thinking to an incident that occurred in Madrid, while on her second trip to Europe. On reflection, after watching the bullfights, a cultural event considered an art form in Spain, Addams experienced shame and horror, which she later recounted in letters to her family and in essays. As Victoria Bissell Brown (2004) says,

this powerful sense of shame . . . makes her [Addams'] point that aesthetics divorced from morality, art separated from life, corrupts the

audience. . . . In crafting her conversion around that event, Jane neatly captured her difficult transition from a life of abstract, bloodless representation to a life of concrete, embodied reality.

(p. 198)

This transition in her thinking from the “priggish girl who preferred artistic representation to human experience” (Brown, 2004, p. 198) was the first step to her developing independence of thought—“one tenet of individualism that she would never abandon” (Knight, in Pinar, 2009, p. 59).

Addams would not, however, consider individualism and independent thinking irreconcilable with collaboration and community. She insisted that opposites were never really opposites; they were merely “unity in its growth” (Brown, 2004, p. 293; Pinar, 2009, p. 73). Edgar Morin (2006) would perhaps see this as his dialogic principle that involves “the complementarity of antagonisms” about which he has similarly stated: “The dialogic principle allows us *to maintain duality at the heart of unity*. It associates two terms that are at the same time complementary and antagonistic” (p. 16, emphasis added.). Morin suggests that one response to a paradox in such dualisms is that we question the particular organization of knowledge that creates them; such organization is often reductive or disjunctive, as is the old paradigm of simplification.

Related to the Madrid incident Jane Addams recognized she had been blinded by abstractions, neglecting the obvious particularities of a situation: “transfixed by the bullfights . . . admiring of their ‘magnificence’”: ‘So much does skill and parade go towards concealing a wrong thing’” (Addams, in Brown, p. 198). Addams’ new thinking sought to find what is concealed by abstractions and the relation of particular individuals and their experiences obfuscated by the abstract (collective) term; for example, she heard the rhetoric of democratic freedom and inalienable rights but knew the terrible oppression of workers. She also recognized that even such benign words as *immigrant*, and *worker* concealed the particular nature and condition of the individuals so categorized. The word worker conceals the fact that children were being exploited as workers, their mental, spiritual, and physical health jeopardized by harsh environment and working conditions (Munro, 1999). Addams lobbied for change to labor laws and for the organization of labor unions. The benefits, she felt, would be that child health would not be compromised, that children might be educated, that they would become better citizens in a democratic society. This work was opposed strongly by those who profited by cheap labor, and by those who opposed the legislation of such “rights.” Democracy, as an ideal—an abstraction—is at the forefront of her thought but democratization depends upon “reciprocal and responsive relations among individuals, ideals, and institutions” (Pinar, 2009 p. 5). Her work was “heroic”, a concept with which she struggled early on, but this work “[was] not a romantic flight of the disembodied but a daily decision to show up and hold on” (Brown, quoted in Pinar, 2009, p. 62).

Morin's holographic principle, linked to the principle of organizational recursion, can be seen in her system: her lived sense of self (subjectivity), in Hull House, in Chicago, connected to a wide network of relations that forms the American democratic social system. Here, she listens intently to and learns from the immigrant population of her neighborhood, learns of their needs and desires; she reflects on what she hears; she writes, she speaks with scholars. She is a nodal connection conversing within this system. The "source and expression of social ethics" that guides her is "the identification with the common lot, which is the essential idea of democracy." (Addams, n. p.). "Not only is the part within the whole, but the whole is in the part" (Morin, 2008, p. 90).

Finally, her second tour of Europe involved deep conversations, leading her to develop a "meta-view." Since we are all parts of wholes, we only ever have a partial view; however, "by knowing something about other societies, by studying past societies, by imagining possible or future societies and contrasting them with the present one in order to decenter ourselves," we may find a meta-view, necessary, says Morin, for complex thinking (p. 92). This meta-view leads to a necessary aspect of complex thinking—uncertainty—that comes from understanding the partiality of one's view and the necessity of reflexivity. Is this not the best possible opportunity of internationalization?

## Recursion

Is there any place for subjectivity in complexity theory? Surely . . . individuals matter . . . ?

In this chapter, I have focused on relational aspects of William Pinar's complicated conversation, pointing to connections I see between *The Worldliness of a Cosmopolitan Education* and Morin's principles of complex thinking. While Pinar claims the primacy of the particular, worldliness, at the heart of cosmopolitanism, is achieved and is a function of conversation, the relational bridge. As Jane Addams did, we need to hold close such abstractions as "democracy, equality and social justice, and peace and harmony with our natural environment" (UNESCO, 1999) to guide our actions in daily life. To my mind, Pinar's most important contribution to date is his situating the particular within the cosmopolitan and biospheric realm, opening a complex conversation.

## Notes

- 1 Edgar Morin, French philosopher, sociologist, and complexity theorist, now President of UNESCO's European Agency for Culture was engaged by UNESCO in 1999 to address educational challenges for the new millennium. "If we want the Earth to be able to meet the needs of its human population, society must undergo a transformation. Thus, tomorrow's world must be fundamentally different than

- the one we know today. We must therefore work toward building a 'feasible future.' Democracy, equality and social justice, and peace and harmony with our natural environment: these must be the key words for this future world" (UNESCO, 1999).
- 2 Retrieved from [www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=conversation](http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=conversation)

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## 21 The Autobiographical, the National, and the International

### A Complicated Conversation

*Hongyu Wang*

Understanding the subjectivity of the internationalization of curriculum studies accompanies my efforts to understand the field's intellectual history and present circumstances, as the individual personifies that history and those circumstances

William F. Pinar (2010, p. 5)

When I was in my doctoral program at Louisiana State University in the late 1990s, Bill Pinar, along with other leaders such as Bill Doll, was in the process of initiating the internationalization of curriculum studies conversationally and institutionally. As a cross-cultural, international person, I found such an initiative simultaneously appealing and distancing. I half-jokingly said that I did not need to talk about internationalization since I was already living it. Of course, I was not unaware that self-reflexivity (Miller, 2005) does not coincide with experience. While the “inter” space—embodying creative tensionality (Aoki, 2005) and third possibilities (Wang, 2004)—is vibrant, co-creative, and endlessly generative, the term *internationalization* seemed too grand for me, as I was (and still am) more interested in the specificity of personhood as it engages the world, whether at the local, the national, or the global level.

Precisely at this site of specificity, however, Bill Pinar's projects in the internationalization of curriculum studies as a complicated conversation—historically, conceptually, subjectively—connects the autobiographical and the global. I participated in his projects in South Africa from 2007 to 2008 and India from 2012 to 2013 as an international panel member who posed questions and engaged in conversations with scholar participants. While explicitly criticizing the over-invested category of identity and identity politics in contemporary US education (Pinar, 2011a; 2013), Pinar nevertheless emphasizes the role of subjectivity and inter-subjectivity in historical and social contexts. His framing of internationalizing curriculum studies as a complicated conversation forms a sharp contrast to the dominant macro-level discussions of globalization (Wang, 2006, 2014a), solidifying a missing link that is essential for global education.

Drawing upon individual scholars' life histories in their national contexts, encouraging dialogical encounters both within and across national borders

through international panels, Pinar frames such a complicated conversation through both distancing from one's own situation and engaging with others who are in unfamiliar situations. As a result, not only is a nationally distinctive field foregrounded in the emergence of a worldwide field, but participants (and audience) are drawn into an ongoing process of internationalization that has a long-term impact in complex and profound ways that we cannot now predict. This approach nurtures a radical openness to the future.

While Pinar's leadership in the internationalization of curriculum studies is far beyond the scope of this essay, I will discuss how my engagement with his project in South Africa has provided passages to new possibilities—a new line of inquiry and pedagogy on nonviolence for myself—and how enacting the links between and among the autobiographical, the national, and the international inspires the renewal of historical, subjective, and ethical relationships in multiple dimensions.

### **Internationalization of Curriculum Studies as a Complicated Conversation**

*Internationalization denotes the possibility of nationally distinctive fields in complicated conversation with each other.*

(Pinar, 2010, p. 3; italics in original)

“Curriculum is an extraordinarily complicated conversation” (Pinar et al., 1995, p. 848). Here conversation is understood as “those open-ended, highly personal, and interest driven events in which persons encounter each other” (p. 848), in contrast to the institutionalized and bureaucratic version of the formal curriculum. Pinar (2010, 2011b, 2011c) envisions the internationalization of curriculum studies as an ongoing embodied, complex, multilayered conversation that brackets the taken-for-granted, negotiates inter-textual understandings of curriculum, and enables the emergence of a worldwide field.

Donna Trueit (2002) situates the notion of conversation in the tradition of orality as poetic and embodied. Such a notion does not coincide with the liberal notion of rational dialogue aiming at achieving emancipation (Ellsworth, 1989). Trueit (2002) also points out: “part of the rhythm of conversation comes from the back and forth as speakers respond to each other, but the other part is the rhythm within a speaker, between sound and silence” (p. 274). Between sound and silence situates the formation of self in relations. For Pinar (2012), a complicated conversation is not only between the self and the other in historical, cultural, and social contexts, but also within the self to democratize the interior world. He contrasts this notion with an instrumental notion in which conversation serves as a tool for carrying out the official curriculum. Consistent with his lifetime work on curriculum, Pinar sees the internationalization of curriculum studies itself as a complicated conversation that is not only intellectual but also ontological, open to



ambiguity and messiness, in tune with the (individual and collective) unconscious leading to delayed understandings (Pitt, 2003), operating at multiple levels—individually, nationally, and internationally—simultaneously.

The international projects—in South Africa, Brazil, Mexico, India, and China—that Pinar has initiated with colleagues worldwide exemplify such a complicated conversation. In the case of South Africa, similar to other projects, Pinar (2010) first interviewed participants about their intellectual life histories, asking them how national and global issues influenced their intellectual and professional journey. Then these scholars contributed writings about the South African curriculum studies. While the interviews might not be part of participants' writings, perhaps their historical and subjective reflection provided a certain context for their thinking. Second, international panel members who were not familiar with the South African field were invited to pose questions to and comment on participants' writings. Pinar (2010) calls it "a micro-moment of internationalization" (p. 13), in which clarification, deepened understanding, reaffirmation, and reconsideration happen in "constant efforts to understand the other, even to revise one's own position in light of questions and comments . . . during very specific and focused conversations" (p. 233).

Third, based upon South African scholars' essays and international exchanges, Pinar (2010) identified key concepts emerging from the essays and conversations: disciplinarity, dialogue, agency, and translation. While this essay cannot discuss each concept in depth, undoubtedly they are not only significant for the South African field of curriculum studies but also informative to curriculum scholars worldwide. But that was not the end, because scholar participants from South Africa were invited to offer the final word/s to end the project. By leaving the final words to scholar participants, Pinar (2010) intends to protect against "neocolonial appropriation" (even though it cannot be guaranteed) and shows his commitment to understanding "another colleague's work on its own terms" (p. 2).

From this brief sketch, we can see that the platform is designed to be as interactive and dynamic as possible, and the intention is to enact a complicated conversation within and between the (national) self and the (national) other across multiple dimensions. Particular attention is paid to providing a certain distance in the process of engagement to minimize the tendency to impose one's own framework onto another. Pinar carefully crafted a productive condition for meaningful conversations to occur.

Next I will make a detour through Pinar's ethical turn before I return to the South Africa project.

## **Historicity and Subjectivity as Ethical**

Stripped of subjectivity and historicity, power becomes a projection that only reproduces itself.

(Pinar, 2011a, p. 39)

Asserting the primary role of the particular—the national, the regional, and the individual—in the internationalization of curriculum studies, beyond the tendency of globalization toward uniformity and the tendency of identity politics toward fragmentation, Pinar (2009, 2011a, 2013, 2014) repositions historicity and subjectivity as ethical relationships. Reconstructing “the character of complicated conversation as ethical” (Pinar, 2011a, p. xiii), Pinar (2013) questions the present preoccupation in the field of US curriculum studies with power, identity, and discourse, which has already reached the point of exhaustion. The primacy of politics has repressed the necessity for ethical self-encounter, intersubjective relationships, and international engagement with the world. To take a critical distance from the US field, Pinar has labored with colleagues worldwide to understand other nationally distinctive fields.

In Pinar’s internationalization project, life history and intellectual history are intertwined and historicity is both individual and national, which follows and departs from the path of *currere*. As Pinar (2012) acknowledges, the formulation of *currere* foregrounds individual person’s lived experience situated in history and culture, but the public world was somehow the background. Still faithful to the importance of the human subject, Pinar nevertheless began to emphasize more on the role of the public world, evident in the new curriculum metaphor of allegory that originally means “speak publicly in an assembly” (p. 50). While Foucault (1984) asserts that “the care of the self is ethically prior in that the relationship with oneself is ontologically prior” (p. 287), I think the self-self and self-other ethical relationships exist simultaneously (Wang, 2004). Such a simultaneity is important for building bridges within and across subjectivity and the public world. Here ethics are not only about human relationships, but also about relationships with the text (disciplinarity) and with the planet (sustainability).

Attending to both life history (of the human subject) and intellectual history (of the discipline or school subject) provides passages to future possibilities that are invisible or repressed in the present. The temporality of curriculum and curriculum studies is not new to the field (see Pinar et al., 1995), but Pinar’s formulation not only highlights the intersection of individual lives and national histories—Chapters 3 and 5 in the South African collection explicitly address such intersections—but also enables the lived connections between and among historicity, subjectivity, and disciplinarity. Pinar’s (2007) notion of disciplinarity through the verticality of intellectual history and the horizontality of present circumstances has informed his international projects. Suggesting ethics—rather than politics—as the central concept of the US field from the distance of his international engagements, Pinar (2013) affirms “the ethical obligation that informs our academic study and pedagogical participation in an ongoing disciplinary conversation that is in its conceptual structure dialogic and temporal” (p. 77).

To engage the historicity, subjectivity, and disciplinarity of curriculum studies as an ethical project, Pinar (2009) articulates a cosmopolitan education

that recognizes both alterity and relationality. In a complicated conversation, a shared assumption or familiarity with the other is not the basis for engagement. When Elizabeth Macedo and I were invited to serve as international panelists for the South Africa project, we were not chosen because we knew the South African situation, but because of what our critical engagement from a distance might bring to international conversations. Especially during the first stage of internationalization when most of us are not familiar with what happens elsewhere, conversing with colleagues worldwide requires all parties to position themselves as learners in an effort to understand others' situations on their own terms. Such an ethics of both distancing and engagement is an ethics of respecting the alterity of difference yet at the same time connecting with the other in a position of mutual learning. I would call it an ethic of nonviolence (Wang, 2014a).

This position of mutual learning is different from the politics of identity and ethnocentrism. Early on when the internationalization of curriculum studies was initiated, Pinar (2003) was already urging participants not to act like political diplomats for their respective countries in curriculum conversations, because international tensions may block scholarly exchanges across national identities. This call resonates with the peace and nonviolence philosophy for transforming relationships rather than a "seizure of power" (Gandhi, 1942/2007, p. 40). Such a transformation of relationships is clearly ethical. Although it is also political, it is political in the sense of shifting relational dynamics toward mutual understanding across boundaries and commitment to the public good, not in the sense of power struggles for individual, group, or national self-interest. Furthermore, transcending nationalism yet immanent in the web of life that includes both human and non-human, historicity and subjectivity as ethical necessarily includes ecological sustainability (Pinar, 2009).

As David Geoffrey Smith (2003) suggests, orienting curriculum and pedagogy to peace as a wisdom response to globalization, our classrooms need to be a place "where people can find themselves through their inquiries and through their relations with one another" (p. 49) and where an ethic of care returns the lost childhood back to the young in a digital world. In a difficult time for public education, Noel Gough (2004) invites us to build "transnational coalitions for public education" (p. 4) that critically and creatively enable the formation of new publics for international citizenship while Pinar (2012) calls for "an ethics of intransigence" (p. 237) against standardization and accountability in the US field. Such ethics go along with a womanist "ethic of risk" in her decision to care and to act without guarantees of success (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002, p. 382). Rooted in the womanist's "sense of an existential interdependence" (p. 382) and African American women's lived experiences, Beauboeuf-Lafontant points out, such an ethic of risk is also an ethic of care that contests cynicism and affirms the necessity of educating all children despite historical oppression and contemporary crises. While it is not attached to success, I also think this ethic implies an openness

to a future that is beyond our current imagination, a future that will benefit from the ripple effect of our compassion, courage, and commitment in today's education despite its difficulty.

### **The Autobiographical, the National, and the International: An Ongoing Process**

From the initial invitation to participate in a project from internalizing curriculum studies to reading Pinar's comments, a little over two years passed in which I lived an experience of being with the other, of translating the untranslatable, and of pretending that I shared a common space impossible and necessary at the same time. That is internationalizing in Pinar's definition: "to institutionalize the *endless effort* to communicate across difference."

(Elizabeth's Macedo's final comment as a scholar participant, in Pinar, 2011b, p. 221; italics added)

When I participated in Pinar's project on the South African curriculum studies, I was already disappointed with the Western notion of and practice of democracy after my decade-long experiences of studying, teaching, and living in the United States (Wang, 2010a). Searching for other landscapes that I was not familiar with, unconsciously connecting to my own voice that had been repressed, I found scholarly engagement with a distant country a welcome direction. Although Pinar did not consider prior knowledge about another country as necessary, I wanted to read something about "the alien" nation before I entered into the field of conversation.

Upon the suggestion of a South African scholar, Dalene M. Swanson, I read Desmond Tutu's (1999) book *No Future without Forgiveness* and Nelson Mandela's (1994/2003) two-volume autobiography, *A Long Walk to Freedom*. I was profoundly touched by Tutu's description of The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's work in the spirit of *Ubuntu* and restorative justice. That spirit quickly became an inspirational light in illuminating my vision of nonviolence for curriculum studies (Wang, 2010a, 2013, 2014a, 2014b). Serendipitously emerging from this international project—not even part of the conversation in any substantial way—nonviolence has become an important message for me not only intellectually, but also pedagogically (Bolliger & Wang, 2013; Wang, 2013).

While I sensed that Bill Pinar was not particularly enthusiastic about nonviolence (although he also affirmed his commitment to nonviolence in declining to taking up arms [2011a, p. 48]), he has always been supportive of my following my own pathways. That was Bill's style of mentorship: generative yet not controlling, open to new possibilities yet not without gently guiding hands. His encouragement brought me to new aspirations through intergenerational intimacy in revolt (Pinar, 2013; Wang, 2010b), while his reservation reminds me of the necessity to not reify nonviolence but to engage it in the "worldliness of curriculum studies" (Miller, 2005). At the

same time, I see him practicing nonviolence in his mentorship, teaching, and international leadership: challenging and cultivating new possibilities, yet not imposing his own ideas and intentions; making commitments yet not controlling the outcome. In my own teaching, I make an effort to allow students to explore at their own pace and in their own space as they engage in unlearning and learning. I am also committed to creating a fertile condition for a complicated conversation to happen in the classroom. The intellectual and pedagogical nourishment Pinar passed to me through his pedagogical patience, watchfulness, and generosity (Aoki, 2005), and subsequently to my students, leads to the younger generation's new words.

In international projects, Pinar deliberately left the final words to scholar participants, who commented on or critiqued Pinar's conceptions or other participants' thoughts or the field at large. In *Final Word*, South African scholar Lesley Le Grange (2010) not only comments on the meanings of intellectual exchanges but also notices the lack of exchanges between and among South African scholars themselves. I noticed the same lack of communication as well serving as a panelist. Le Grange (2010) reflects that the lack is probably due to the divided nature of the education community in South Africa. Such a lack of engagement among scholars from different camps also exists in other countries due to either hierarchy (for instance, China) or division (for instance, the United States). Le Grange (2010) further points out, "My hope is that this volume edited by Professor William Pinar might provide some impetus for more robust conversation between South African scholars of curriculum that transcends traditional boundaries" (p. 244). With only a few years having passed since the book's publication, perhaps it is too early to tell whether the book has had any influence on promoting conversations among scholars within South Africa, but I read the hope of Professor Le Grange as a challenge not only for scholars in his country, but also for other countries. To a certain degree, a stranger's position, such as Pinar's, has its own advantage in bringing diverse scholars' ideas together in a single volume (Pinar, 2010).

My own positioning in the South Africa project was necessarily doubled since I was a Chinese living in the United States who had received both Chinese and American graduate education. So in my questions and comments to South African scholars, I spoke through a double lens. "Situating-the-self" as Pinar (2010, p. 230) terms it, in my case, was not to compare different countries, but as a gesture of respect for the other whom I did not know, implying that my positioning may or may not be applicable to their situations.

In paying respect to my unfamiliar colleagues, however, I later realized that I probably had erred on the side of more deference and less mutuality. While I was fascinated by the notion of *Ubuntu*, since South African scholars did not bring it up, I did not initiate any questions about this notion. Later I found Lesley Le Grange's (2011) essay on *Ubuntu*. If I had asked relevant questions, I might have achieved some deepened understandings. Moreover,

such a discussion might form an interesting link with Crain Soudien's concept of "modern-indigeneity" (quoted in Pinar, 2010, p. 235), in which both modernity and indigeneity need to be re-worked since tradition has gone through immense hybridization. Decentering myself and attending to others' needs was a gendered and cultural tendency on my part (and still is to some degree), historically and subjectively situated in my lived relationality, including scholarly relationships. Such an understanding helped me to become more assertive in my later work in the India project and I asked Indian scholars questions regarding nonviolence philosophy and contemporary education.

A complicated conversation has been an ongoing process since Pinar's book was finished, nationally, internationally, and individually. This open-ended and unfinished nature is also confirmed by scholar participants in Brazil (Pinar, 2011b) and Mexico (Pinar, 2011c), as their final words testify. What is inspired by the process but not written in the book (such as my story) is equally important because individuals bring their renewed sense of historicity, subjectivity, and disciplinarity into their later work. What was a sideline in the project could become a major line of work later. Internationalization does not just happen between and among nations and persons, but also within a person. Such a profound influence is long-term and travels on unpredictable and diverse paths, which is far beyond the pages of this short chapter. Inspirations will remain . . .

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## 22 The Practice of Radical Love

### Understanding Curriculum as Queer Theological Text

*Reta Ugena Whitlock*

My work as a curriculum theorist has until now focused primarily on what Brian Casemore has called the autobiographical demand of place. Place for me demands to be unpacked and examined to see its interrelatedness with self and society; place as it is intersected by gender, sexuality, race, and fundamentalist Christianity is a rich context through which to approach curriculum as the interpretation of lived experiences. Southern place is an appropriate stage that allows us to see political and social trends up close and personal. The South's skeletons are in open closets; thus, we can take the pulse of U.S. culture by examining the Heart of Dixie. This is the shape of my curriculum theory. With this chapter, the demand takes a decidedly theological turn. It is no longer enough to talk about place in terms of how it both shapes and is shaped by religious experience. Religion without theology is vacuous; and while the narratives have value phenomenologically and autobiographically, they now also beg to be theorized theologically.

Although thinking theologically about curriculum is not a new concept, a closer look suggests that when we talk about religion, we primarily do so outside of theological contexts. Religion is easy: It is provocative and controversial; it is readily historicized and theorized; it has social and cultural implications. And it is a topic that may be approached from multiple disciplines and perspectives. Religion is, in short, part of our daily lives and public consciousness. Theology, on the other hand, is talk about God, doctrine, dogma, involving topics that make non-theological academics nervous. Over the last twenty years, we have neatly situated most scholarly work on theology into the political movement of liberation theology. It allows us a place of secular safety for talking about God within the bounds of critical theory, yet the focus seems—rightly if I understand the goals and precepts of liberation theology correctly—to be more on liberation and social justice and less on theology. While this gives legs to a theologically based project, it offers little in the way of advancing efforts to understand curriculum as theological text, a frame proposed in the mid-1990s (Pinar et al., 2006). Perhaps most limiting, critical theory/critical pedagogies seldom challenge sexist and heterosexist constructions of class (Althaus-Reid, 2001). My goal, however, is not to critique liberation theology, but to propose that the possibilities



envisioned by those who imagined that curriculum and theology might speak to one another have not been realized in the intervening years. This essay seeks to imagine anew those possibilities by asking what understanding curriculum as theological text might look like in a twenty-first-century world.

In 1998, David Purpel boldly proclaimed that there was a moral and spiritual crisis in education and argued that attempts at educational reform (recall this was three years prior to No Child Left Behind and George W. Bush) that failed to attend to this crisis would be empty and ineffective. Since then, I contend that moral and spiritual crisis has become more pronounced, as No Child Left Behind, accountability culture, standardized testing, Race To The Top, regulations at state levels, and data-driven teacher education programs across the country have proliferated—perhaps, as Peter Taubman has suggested, beyond our ability to “say no” anymore (2009). These measures are symptomatic of crisis—but not the kind of crisis legislators and educational policy makers would have a bewildered public believe. The crisis is indeed a moral and spiritual one, and for that, we must speak a different language; we must employ and develop language alive with spirit and inviting of humanity. It must be a radical language of love. It must then, for me, be queered.

In her introduction to the collection *Take Back the Word: A Queer Reading of the Bible*, queer theologian Mary Ann Tolbert asks, “As lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgendered and seeking people, do we really want to ‘take back the word’? And if we do, what ‘word is it we want to ‘take back’?” (2000, p. vii). In the last decade, taking back the Word—not merely texts sacred to believers but the Message of love and liberation, peace and hope we believe it inherently proclaims—has become the project of Queer Theology. Tolbert goes on to say, “The Word is powerful and powerfully dangerous. . . . [having] the potential to destroy as much as to console and inspire” (p. xi); therefore taking it back entails finding new ways—I suggest *queer ways*—of finding “possibilities of participating in the new thing God is always doing in the world” (p. xi). The potential for understanding God speaking and working in the world is the contemporary theological project; the potential for understanding that God’s work is disruptive to humanity’s oppressive and controlling capacities and tendencies is the queer theological project.

Tolbert is right: the Word—I shall interpret this for our purposes to mean the Scriptures as a living, relevant source of communication between humans and the ground of all being, which is, according to existentialist theologian Paul Tillich, God (1975, p. 10)—is dangerous. Within the same potential, it holds for the proliferation for love also lies its potential for hurt—but whichever potential is realized depends upon interpretations and traditions claimed by humans. Foucault contended that everything is dangerous, and that our ethical and political choice is to “determine which is the main danger” by means of a “hyper and pessimistic activism” (1983). Therefore, it is not the danger that Queer Theology would seek to obviate; danger might

take a queer turn toward love and celebration. It is not in spite of the danger that the Word might and should be claimed, but because of it. That is the radical move of Queer Theology and the radical possibility it holds for the interdisciplinary discourses of educational studies.

Queer Theology is, as Patrick Cheng notes, “the place where Christian theology and Queer Theory meet” (2011, p. x). Queerness informs theology for the postmodern twenty-first century just as thinking theologically likewise informs queerness. When these two converge into one discourse, that of Queer Theology, scholars have a new and distinct framework for situating curriculum inquiry. In my field of curriculum theory, understanding curriculum as both queer and theological text has well-established historical and theoretical traditions; likewise, Queer Theology scholars have worked to develop corresponding methodologies for their emergent work. What I propose here is looking at queer theological methodologies as relevant to inquiry in education.

## **Queer Theology**

A particular challenge for both queer theory and theology is that from the inception of each, they remain most comfortably situated in a theoretical—transcendent, if you will—realm. A critique of both is that queer theory discussions take place exclusively among academic intellectuals and theological discussions take place exclusively among theologians. As a student of both, I can attest to the inaccessibility of scholarship prevalent in both for audiences outside academe. A brief survey of Queer Theology yielded literature that varied in its accessibility.

Queer Theology is theology read through the lens of queer theory. It begins with an assumption that gender non-conformity and queer desire have always been present in human histories and cultures, including those recorded in the Bible. Queer Theology seeks to unravel Biblical structures and stories that have been oppressive to marginalized peoples and also to reappropriate those stories to shatter oppressive, often patriarchal, heteronormative structures today. In the last decade, there has been a proliferation of books that fit under the heading of Queer Theology. Some, understandably, are geared toward popular readers and have titles more directly applicable to religious and or liturgical practice—or addressing issues such as “being a gay Christian” or “queer theology for Christian witness.”

In *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* (2011), Patrick Cheng presents Queer Theology as being much more than LGBTQ people talking about God. He presents an overview of a field that offers understanding beyond the apologetic “what the Bible says about homosexuality” that proliferated for thirty years. For Cheng, Queer Theology is about disrupting boundaries and binaries that surround sexuality and gender. In his discussion of God as the “sending forth of radical love,” Cheng suggests that conceptualizing God as the source of radical love might dissolve false,

human-established dualisms. Radical love, then, is both Cheng's interpretation of the Trinity and his methodology for queering theology. Radical love is queer in that it intentionally undermines the normative; it is not love for the faint-hearted nor the conformist. Radical love is a shattering love—"a love so extreme that it dissolves existing boundaries" (p. 73). If, he explains, sin is "that which opposes radical love," and if radical love is understood as "a love so extreme that it dissolves existing boundaries," then "the rejection of radical love is the reinforcing of the boundaries that keep categories separate and distinct from each other"—such as sexual and gender essentialism (p. 74). This premise is Cheng's starting point for suggesting the disruptive promise of Queer Theology.

If *Radical Love: An Introduction to Queer Theology* situates theology as queer and love as radical, Marcella Althaus-Reid proposes what she terms an Indecent Theology; she rediscovers God "outside the heterosexual ideology which has been prevalent in the history of Christianity and theology (2003, p. 2). Her two provocative per/verse works, *Indecent Theology: Theological Perversions in Sex, Gender and Politics* and *The Queer God*, explores sexuality found within systematic theology, the dogma/teachings of the Church. Further, she rejects the notion that we can only know God through what she terms, "the closeted knowing found in the tradition of the church and theology" (p. 171). In *Indecent Theology*, she continues and re-contextualizes Liberation Theology—and its predominantly postcolonial, Marxist lenses—by casting a theology of suspicion and doubting. She does this with a methodology that theorizes the sexuality of the poor, thereby "questioning those very hermeneutical principles which led liberationists to be indifferent to the reality of [the poor in the streets] in the first place" (2001, p. 5). Thus, she presents at the same time a continuation of Liberation theology and a "disruption of it" (2001, p. 5).

Drawing from multiple disciplines in addition to systematic theology, Althaus-Reid draws out the complexity of both sexuality and theology, citing among others Butler, Sedgwick, Fanon, Said, Weeks, Daly, Derrida, Deleuze and Guattari, and Baudrillard. She exposes the hegemonic processes and practices of mainstream theology by "expanding the reflection of women and poverty . . . the real subjects and living metaphors of theology" (2001, p. 7). From the first chapter, "Indecent proposals for women who would like to do theology without using underwear," to the last, in which she discusses what she terms "economic erections and global erections," Althaus-Reid "does" Queer Theology through queer sexual practices, and in so doing honors the perverse, embodied, dangerous elements of queer theory. Her theology lies neither in academe nor the pulpit—it is in the streets.

### Understanding Curriculum as Theological Text

In *Understanding Curriculum*, Pinar, Reynolds, Slattery, and Taubman (2006) posited theology as a framework for talking about curriculum as the

interdisciplinary interpretation of lived experiences. A comprehensive synoptic text situating thinking theologically about curriculum in various historical moments, Pinar et al. are careful to note one major criticism of thinking of curriculum theologically; namely, there are such close associations of theology with religious oppression throughout history. Authors who try to use religious and theological language (there is a difference) run the risk of “an uncritical acceptance of patriarchal, rational, and scholastic methodology” (p. 632). The authors propose a search for a common ground for discussing curriculum as theological text. Common ground is no easy task; ground that might be acceptable to the Liberal Left—Liberation Theology derived from critical theory/pedagogy is largely unacceptable to the capitalist Religious Right. Pinar et al. point out that to understand curriculum is to understand it as “a moral and ethical project, grounded theologically” (p. 637). It is, they also note, a risky path, and a complicated one. Since the Middle Ages, as *Understanding Curriculum* aptly traces, the language and thinking of the sacred and profane have been sharply distinguished, along with the bifurcation of “truth from faith, knowledge from ethics, thought and action” (p. 637). The place for theology was divinity school, while rational thought—which became the language of the Enlightened State—proliferated throughout the academy. Both sides staunchly guard this border—an imaginary one enforced between the language of God and the language of people. Theology is for theologians, and academics is for academicians. Render unto Caesar. Then came the postmodern shift, and with it, queer theory.

Since the 1990s, understanding curriculum as theological text has been taken up by a handful of scholars. Patrick Slattery offered a “postmodern vision of curriculum” in his *Curriculum Development in a Postmodern World* (2013) and advanced the significance of a theological dimension in understanding curriculum. He argues for a theological process that “gives possibility to the living word, in all its mystery, ambiguity, and complexity” (p. 99). David Purpel provided a curriculum framework for talking theologically in his naming of the moral and spiritual crisis in education. Alan Block explores the possibilities for understanding curriculum that may be found using the language and methods of Rabbinic Judaism in his examination of Joseph Schwab’s educational propositions for “the practical,” for example. But of the curriculum studies that claim theology as a framework for scholarship, only one has proceeded to queer that theological reading—or theologize the queer reading, depending on how one shifts one’s focus.

### **An Example of Inquiry Queer Theological Text: Noah’s Tent**

In the curriculum theory synoptic text *Race, Religion, and a Curriculum of Reparation* (2006), William Pinar presents what I consider to be a methodology that exemplifies Queer Theology—if he himself did not claim it

specifically as such, but termed it more of a methodological collage. I believe we can honor his claim if only to note the theological interpretation present in his queering of the Biblical story. The central biblical episode around which Pinar makes his case for homoeroticized constructions of whiteness is Noah in the tent and the curse of Canaan. He draws principally from Freudian psychoanalysis, and also strategically cites Kaja Silverman, Lee Edleman, and Robin Wiegman. This story of Noah is provocative, intriguing, and controversial. Because of its implied sexual undertone, it is not one usually included alongside the story of the ark in Sunday School. Scholars have speculated on it for years, unsure not only of its meaning for scriptural interpretation, but of the plot itself. What happened in that tent? For, as Pinar shows, we cannot meaningfully interpret the curse of Canaan—which he contends lies at the heart of understanding the homoeroticized, racial desires of Black male bodies by White men. Time and again, Pinar brings us back to that persistent question. What happened in the tent?

Pinar's arguments in this book push boundaries of curriculum by examining interdisciplinary texts—including the Hebrew Scriptures in this case—a pedagogical strategy he uses very well in his employment of synoptic texts. He juxtaposes five domains to form a loose “collage” (p. xiv) that points to what he calls the “incestuous genealogy of whiteness and of the racism it requires” (p. xiv). They are

- 1) ancient Israelite culture to specifically examine the Noah and curse of Ham story; 2) the crisis of late-nineteenth-century European masculinity and Freudian engagement with it; 3) the history and culture of circumcision as marker of God's covenant; 4) coming-of-age rituals in the South Pacific, which exposes the sexual side of circumcision culture; and 5) “traces of these four domains in contemporary representations of race in literary and popular culture.”

(p. xiv)

The objective here is not white male redemption, but reparation, ethical and erotic reparation. Reparation requires (he references Kaja Silverman here) “the shattering of hegemonic white masculinity . . . the horrific legacy of that mythic drunken night inside Noah's tent” (p. 182). The operative word I find in that sentence is mythic. We do not know—whatever “knowing” can mean—what took place in the tent. Was it homoerotic? Incestuous? Was it “merely” looking, or sexual, or both? What Pinar has done is offer his “collage” to present a scenario in which father-son-father desire goes awry and stays awry. The curse of Ham, a mainstay for justifying the passion for Black male bodies by White males, is a cursed covenant that continues today and will continue so long as that desire is not acknowledged and reconciled. Pinar's means for getting to that conclusion is a circuitous one—he never promises an easy story. He offers a psychoanalytic theological understanding as a contemporary curriculum discourse that has the potential for making meaning in a postmodern world still seeking. “What is possible, he finally offers, is study” (p. 183).

## The Communion of Radical Love: Pushing Methodological Boundaries with Queer Theology

The notion of radical love is not new to theological discourse. Dietrich Bonhoeffer had begun to consider that humanity's radical responsibility in action—which I will call here radical love—might be one viable option for post-war Germany to emerge from the nightmare of Nazism. Had he lived, I believe this would have been the conclusion he reached as he continued to grapple with the concept he called “religionless Christianity” (*Ethics, Letters and Papers from Prison*). Rabbi Abraham Heschel spoke of “radical action” (2011, pp. 58, 74); he contended that love as an internal feeling was not an action. Without the radical act, love is sentimentality.

Nor is radical theological thought new to educational studies, particularly to my field of curriculum theory. Pinar et al. offered understanding curriculum as theological text as a contemporary discourse in 1996, citing early reconceptualist of curriculum theory James Macdonald, who pondered a theory based in part upon a “mytho-poetic imagination” whose language is one of “radical astonishment” (p. 179). If theory, as Macdonald suggested to us, “is a prayerful act,” (1995, p. 181), then inquiry might be a queerly theological act. Dwayne Huebner speaks of prophetic criticism and extends the discussion to include the shattering of idols we hold—even as he cautions us against the idolatrous holding of knowledge apart from those lives that “construct and use it” (Hillis, 1999, p. 367). Drawing from pastor and theologian Walter Brueggemann, education scholar David Purpel described a “moral and spiritual crisis in education” (1988), which he suggested might be addressed by a prophetic voice of transformation (p. 115). I have mentioned Patrick Slaterry's (2013) and Alan Block's theological interpretations for curriculum and teaching in their respective research over the past three decades. The list goes on, most recently with critiques, like John Weaver's (2014) critique of American Christianity.

Queer Theology is a space—both within curriculum theory and without—of convergence of queer theory and theology—of shattering boundaries and God-talk—and a space for divergence of postmodern and pre-modern discourses. “The problem of the schools,” Huebner contended, “is—the schools are not places where the moral and spiritual life is lived with any kind of intentionality” (Hillis, 1999, pp. 414–415). If this sums up the unresolved moral and spiritual crisis in education, then Queer Theology might allow us to trouble not only what we think we know about morality, spirituality, and religion in schools (and make no mistake—they *are* there), but also what we think we know about education, curriculum, and schools themselves. A curriculum of radical love might allow us to cultivate prophetic visionings for the promise of our fields and our schools. Further, it might allow us to find ways to shatter the idols of standardization and testing, of “scientific” research and “best practices.” And finally, radical love—which lies at the heart of Queer Theology—might allow us to dissolve false boundaries that divide and exclude, so that we might engage in

communion with one another as we pursue what Tillich calls our “ultimate concern” (1957, p. 5)—the intentional practice of faith.

A final note: My curriculum work on place began with Bill as my major professor at LSU. He encouraged me to theorize place and its intersections with fundamentalist Christianity and queerness. Two years ago I told him I planned to enter seminary because writing about religion was no longer enough—I needed a language to explain what grounds my faith, Bill was not surprised. It was as though he was expecting me to take this turn and glad I was taking it. This is what his mentorship and friendship has meant to me these years. At every new stop, he’s waiting—not for me to catch up, but rather for me to see something new in my work that he suspected all along.

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## 23 William F. Pinar's Contributions to the World Curriculum Field

*Zhang Hua*

### Introduction

Habit, then, is not only about subjective reconstruction. It is also about social reconstruction, in my example an academic discipline.

William F. Pinar (2015)

Habits are expressions of growth.

John Dewey (1980[1916], p. 51)

The first time I met Professor William F. Pinar was in the spring of 2000 on the campus of Louisiana State University (LSU) in Baton Rouge, on the occasion of the first conference on the internationalization of curriculum studies, titled “A Call for Conversations,” hosted by Pinar, Professor William E. Doll, Jr., and Donna Trueitt. This was an historical moment for curriculum studies. Hundreds of curriculum scholars from many countries attended the conference, carried on international dialogues on various topics, and most importantly, determined to establish the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS; [www.iaacs.ca](http://www.iaacs.ca)). At that time, the financial conditions of the third-world countries were not strong. Pinar and Doll contributed their own funds to support the attendance of curriculum scholars from these countries, including us from China. In addition, Pinar determined that no registration fee would be charged to international participants in curriculum studies conferences. This great tradition is still honored by IAACS and by its U.S. affiliate, the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (AAACS; [www.aaacs.org](http://www.aaacs.org)).

From 2000 to the present, in the past 14 years, Pinar and I have been keeping in touch through email, so I have had opportunities to ask for advice from him on my curriculum research. I was a guest in Bill's and Jeff's home three times when I gave talks at LSU and, later, at the University of British Columbia (UBC). I witnessed how he works at home: “My daily habits are few in number: writing, reading, note-taking from reading, teaching (including reading student papers, answering email), and ‘service’ (communication



with colleagues, including manuscript reviews) each 60–90 minutes per day” (Pinar, 2015). I remember one morning in the autumn of 2007. I woke up at about 8 am and went to the kitchen to have a glass of water. A note hanging on the cupboard leaped into my eyes: “Good morning, Zhang Hua! Coffee is ready in the pot. Please take care of yourself. I kept writing a paper last night. I am tired now and have gone back to sleep for a while, Bill.” I was amazed by his work spirit.

In his home, I noticed a kind of begonia: in the kitchen, in his study, his living room. “Why do you keep so many pots of same plant?” I asked him one day. He answered me quietly, “Paul Klohr gave this begonia to me when I graduated from Ohio State University in 1972 and told me: ‘Keep it alive.’ Harold Albery gave it to Paul Klohr in 1948 on the occasion of Paul’s graduation, and Boyd Bode gave it to Albery at his graduation in 1924.” I realized that the begonia is not an ordinary houseplant, but an academic symbol. Academic development needs careful shelter and nurturing, just like raising a plant.

## Subjectivity

Our calling is not to cram but to encourage children to explore their subjective singularity, their historical subjecthood, through subject matter.

William F. Pinar (2011, p. 143)

Reality requires subjectivity: It is (not only) subjectivity that enables reality to speak.

William F. Pinar (2009, p. vii)

Man is not the lord of beings. Man is the shepherd of Being.

Martin Heidegger (1977/1993, p. 245)

Pinar’s extraordinary research can be summarized as curriculum studies for subjective and social reconstruction. His curriculum philosophy can be divided into three parts that are correlated with each other. Axiologically, curriculum aims are the revelation and heightening of subjectivity or subjective values. Epistemologically, curriculum knowledge is understanding, lived experience, and personal knowledge. Methodologically, curriculum methods are autobiography and “complicated conversations.” By going back to each person’s biographic situations and engaging in dialogical encounters, human subjects create their own understandings, personal knowledge and lived experiences, and at last, realize their subjective values. That’s the core value of curriculum and education.

The development of Pinar’s subjectivity-oriented curriculum theory can be distinguished into three stages: the *currere* stage, conversation stage, and cosmopolitanism stage. These stages are interacting, interpenetrating, and

integrating. Each stage has its core pursuit and related themes. For the *currere* stage, the core pursuit is individuality, and the main themes are the analysis of educational experience of students and teachers, justification of autobiographical method, and individual reconstruction. For the conversation stage, the core pursuit is sociality, and the main themes are gender study, race study, and social reconstruction. For the cosmopolitanism stage, the core pursuit is worldliness, and the main themes are criticism of technocracy, consumerism, and the accountability-based education. Mencius in ancient China once said, “All things in the world completely locate in my mind. If I honestly go back to myself, I can find their essences, which is the greatest happiness for me!” (*Mencius*, Jinxin, Part I). Similar to Mencius, Pinar drew support from the infinitive form and Latin root of the noun curriculum—*currere*—to invent an epoch-making curriculum school: autobiographical curriculum theory. Beginning in the 1970s, the young Pinar succeeded in breaking the “curriculum cage” of technical rationality and conventional thinking brought on by the Tyler Rationale, meanwhile reconceptualizing the curriculum field in the United States. From the 1980s to the present, the mission of *currere* theory has been to deconstruct political conservatism and its educational replica—standardization, routinization, standardized tests, efficiency, accountability—all “these forms of death to the human spirit” (Pinar, 1994, p. 197). Since the twenty-first century, the task of *currere* theory is to break the copulation between corporate capitalism and information technology, and the school-as-business model, and to rescue the subjectivity of disappearing students and teachers in cyberspace (Pinar, 2013, pp. 16–44).

The content of *currere* or autobiographical methodology involves the unity of recalling, imagination, understanding, and acting. To recall one’s life history and re-experience the past life in order to recover one’s past and honestly face it, is the “regressive” process. To imagine one’s future life and long for an ideal life in order to create a new “I”, is the “progressive” process. To understand what one has discovered regressively and progressively in order to reveal the reasons of one’s life history and lay theoretical foundations for further actions, is the “analytical” process. To act in the world in order to realize the ideal of the new “I”, is the “synthetical” process (Pinar, 1994, pp. 19–27). Putting the four processes together, *currere* is the imaginative action that generates lived experience.

Conversation is an extension of *currere* to interpersonal relations. If we understand *currere* as a continuous dialogue between “I” and “me,” *currere* is also a conversation that pluralizes and theorizes the curriculum field. Conversation means ethical engagement in alterity. It is dialogue based on the premise of the absolute respect for differences. As such, conversation overcomes the “ahistorical” and “atheoretical” character of the dominant paradigm of the “objective model” and recovers the intellectual history and present paradigmatic dialogues in curriculum field (Pinar, 2000).

Conversation also reconceptualizes curriculum development. Conversation-based curriculum development means that the thoughts and understandings

of teachers and students are the core of any curriculum. Curriculum development intends to develop the thoughts and understandings which are the embodiment of teachers and students' subjectivity and intersubjectivity, but not to constrain and replace them by "developed" subject matters. Personal knowledge and lived experience, the life world and everyday reality are the fundamental signifiers of curriculum content, in addition to specialized subject matter. Curriculum is the eternal interaction among lived experience, life world, and subject matters, "an intellectual-autobiographical matter of scholarship," not "an institutional specification of 'objectives'" (Pinar, 2009, p. 11).

Third, conversation as a discursive practice reconstructs teaching. Indeed, the basic character of conversation is "orality," which is "the originality and creativity that subjectivity can convey when one is embodied in the present moment" (Pinar, 2011, p. 14). For education and curriculum, orality is the embodiment, personification, and subjectivization of curriculum contents including subject matters and life world—a *sine qua non* of teaching. Teaching is not only the transmission of subject matter from teachers to students, but a dialogical encounter between teachers and students, mediated by subject matter and life world. Teaching is therefore a collaborative inquiry into knowledge and, finally, life. If written texts are musical notes, teaching is singing and songs; and teaching-singing is also music-composing. The liberty of teachers and students is a prerequisite of teaching inasmuch as orality is the basic characteristic of teaching. That's why Pinar stated, "Without liberty we cannot teach" (Pinar, 2009, p. 51).

Cosmopolitanism is the extension of *currere* to the whole world, including every culture and nation, and everything in the natural world. According to Pinar, the essence of cosmopolitanism is "worldliness" (Pinar, 2009, which embodies the intrinsic relationship between human beings and the world. As a subjective constituent, worldliness means human beings' love and attachment, understanding and creation, responsibility and obligation, to the world. Each human being is, to invoke Martin Heidegger, "being-in-the-world." So, to recover the immanence of relationship between human beings and the world is both a subjective and worldly reconstruction (Pinar, 2009, p. ix). Worldliness also echoes and embodies the life realm of "unity between heaven and man," an ancient Chinese wisdom statement.

The core of cosmopolitanism is "interculturality," which is the concretization of worldliness. Interculturality means cultural communication and interaction following the prerequisite of absolute respect of cultural differences. Interculturality echoes and embodies Chinese ancient wisdom of all-under-heaven perspective, wherein all peoples in the world share the same ground and same sky; if one group does harm to other ones, it also does harm to itself. I think that the significance of Bill Pinar's projects on the internationalization of curriculum studies is not only to the curriculum field, but also to the development of cosmopolitanism and interculturality in the age of globalization. Today, hegemonism and unilateralism are the

main risks to world peace and development; whereas, worldliness means the immanence of relationship between one culture and other cultures, one nation and other nations, one race and other races, one region and other regions. Broadly speaking, that is interculturality, the main aim of education for international understanding.

In the natural world, the worldliness of cosmopolitanism can embody the intrinsic relationship between human beings and nature. From the Enlightenment in eighteenth century on, human beings have been falling into the mire of anthropocentrism, seeing the natural world as only worth its value in mining its resources. Pinar repeatedly has appealed to the importance of sustainability and ecological consciousness for subjectivity and worldliness. He wrote, "With 1 billion human beings hungry, with the biosphere facing extinction, with the destruction of democracy the radical right has achieved in the United States, the pursuit of life and liberty becomes urgent" (Pinar, 2009, p. 7). So, the basic aim for cosmopolitan education is to nurture the "naturalness" of human beings and regain the interdependence between man and nature. If we understand curriculum based on cosmopolitanism and worldliness, we will not only have nature as a new dimension of curriculum development, but also build up a "new subjectivity" among subject matters, children, society, and nature (Zhang, 2000, pp. 261–267). The person who develops "new subjectivity" is the "new subject" (Zhang, 2000, pp. 210–229) for a "new curriculum"—a cosmopolitan curriculum. Such is the main contribution of Pinar's subjectivity-oriented curriculum theory.

What is the key problem of curriculum studies worldwide? According to Pinar, it is problem of "proximity between curriculum studies scholars and government-mandated school reform, and global tendencies toward ahistorical, presentistic school reform." To address this problem, Pinar urges "basic research into the intellectual histories of nationally-distinctive academic fields of curriculum studies" (Pinar, 2008). The "proximity" here does not mean an active interaction among theory, practice, and policy-making, or the good collaboration among curriculum studies scholars, schoolteachers, and educational administrators, but rather the connection between technical rationality and autocratic ideology. Because of technical rationality, curriculum studies becomes curriculum prescriptions, commanding practitioners to follow up the procedures of curriculum development. The problem of proximity signifies a control-orientation in the curriculum field.

Pinar's several projects have had special significance for the Chinese curriculum field. First, it meets the need for the renaissance of Chinese culture in the twenty-first century. As English historian Peter Watson (2002, p. 761) pointed out, nearly all the non-Western countries or cultures, including India, China, Japan, and Islamic countries, have tried their best to cater to the need of "modernization" and Western modes of thought and action in academic fields. However, these countries have hardly created any outstanding accomplishments in philosophy, literature, science, or arts like Western countries. Pinar enthusiastically collaborates with Chinese colleagues

to promote China's unique development, introducing us to international scholarship and organizations so as to develop, on our own terms, our own academic research.

Second, Pinar's project echoes the long-term tradition of humanistic research in China. From his early twenties to now, all the research Pinar has been doing can be generally called "humanistic inquiry." In the 5000-years' recorded history of civilization, China has a weak tradition of scientific inquiry, but a strong one of humanistic research. Without a humanistic spirit, a science culture inevitably will do harm to the world, even destroy it. So, I think that the Chinese humanistic tradition is a value base and spiritual guarantee for the modernization of the Chinese world. Pinar's humanistic inquiry in curriculum studies can not only enlighten Chinese colleagues to respect and study the Chinese humanistic tradition, but also give rise to East–West conversations on humanistic research.

Finally, as Pinar reminds us, curriculum development must be based on understanding. Otherwise it will turn to technical rationality and proceduralism.

For me, Pinar's work has meant that Chinese curriculum scholars should enhance our own cultural consciousness and theoretical confidence. Fully respecting and understanding our own wisdom traditions—Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, among others—positively recovering and promoting the traditions of educational democratization, wholeheartedly realizing the internationalization of curriculum studies: These are the necessary conditions for building up Chinese curriculum theory.

At the 2014 curriculum conference at Hangzhou Normal University in China, Pinar asked a question to the participants in his keynote address: "Can China's curriculum scholars and schoolteachers chart their own distinctive course?" (Pinar, 2014b). This is a soberly and enlightening curriculum question to all countries, including China. In his famous 1794 essay titled "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" Immanuel Kant wrote: "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another" (Kant, 1990, p. 22). In the curriculum field, the "self-imposed immaturity" is the conscious overlook of one's own curriculum history, traditions, cultures, and problems. The enlightenment or emergence from immaturity in the Chinese curriculum field means that Chinese curriculum scholars and schoolteachers must be free to solve their own problems with international horizons. Only if we adopt this attitude are we qualified to answer Pinar's question: Yes, we can.

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## 24 Working from Within, Together

*William F. Pinar*

The personal and the professional have been intertwined in my life, as this collection testifies. Here I strive to separate the two. Especially in an era when cynicism prevails—there seems only politics not ethics—it is obligatory to make the effort, to show that everything is not “always already” quid pro quo, that there is third thing to which even friendship is subservient, in this instance the complicated conversation that is curriculum studies. The organization of the collection by name reiterates the individuality of its contributors: each expresses a distinctiveness drawn—reconstructed—from the influences that helped form us. Each of us changes the conversation by virtue of our participation in it. Each of you has influenced me; I suspect you have influenced each other too. For being present in this conversation, I convey my heartfelt thanks to each of you. Especially I am indebted to Mary Aswell Doll for organizing and participating in the event.

This conversation has a history, as Janet Miller reminds, however remote recent decades now seem. To detach from the dying star the Tyler Rationale had become, Miller and I worked, as she notes, “*alongside*.”<sup>1</sup> Such “juxtaposition” did not imply intellectual coincidence of course, although we crossed paths continually; we still do. “Alongside” is another articulation of “relation,” the concept William E. Doll, Jr. and Donna Trueit emphasize in their essays.

One relationship Janet Miller and I shared was with our mentor, the remarkable Paul R. Klohr. She recalls her meetings with him in the apartment he found for her. Miller remembers Donald R. Bateman, whose stirring speech on the politics of curriculum reverberated during the 1973 University of Rochester Conference.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, the political—perhaps first advanced by Dwayne Huebner a decade earlier—<sup>3</sup> became an important curriculum discourse, as Klohr suggested in his reflections on the Conference.<sup>4</sup> Like Huebner, Klohr called for new language forms, including metaphor, a concept I noted—in *Curriculum Studies in China*—not exactly new to our Chinese colleagues but elusive in a North American field overly influenced by social science. Those new language forms became curriculum discourses by which William Reynolds, Patrick Slattery, and Peter Taubman organized efforts to understand curriculum.

Klohr's influence on all of us fortunate to study with him was profound. He had been director of Ohio State's Laboratory School; only decades into our friendship did he confide the trauma of suffering through its closure. Both he and Bateman (and L. Janet Stewart, with whom I studied English teaching methods as an undergraduate) were then transferred to the College of Education. It was clear to me that Klohr never quite recovered from this event, and that his support of us was always at some remove, as for his generation the only mark of a curriculum professor's success was his or her influence in the schools.

In the paradigmatic shift—<sup>5</sup>from a field organized around school-based curriculum development to understanding curriculum—engaging in serious conversation with each other seemed central. After all, historical continuities as well as discontinuities had to be articulated, debated, worked through, now not only domestically but also internationally. Maria Luiza Süsskind continues that important disciplinary labor—expressed also in Marla Morris' essay—in her effort to find traces of my "influence" upon Brazilian theorists. It seems her colleagues have been spared. For me, specifying and clarifying differences and resemblances among concepts is the more inviting undertaking, especially now, when "influence" is reduced to citation counts, quantified like everything else. Internationalization is about undoing influence: through recontextualization decolonization can occur. Internationalization is about complicated conversation with colleagues whose concepts may seem the same but are inevitably embedded in different intellectual histories, cultures, and political and economic circumstances. Such conversation I enjoyed with Maria Luiza Süsskind, "acknowledging historicity and subjectivity within curriculum."

Süsskind's fine phrase specifies the project but perhaps not the reciprocal relation between the two terms. I seek the historicity of subjectivity: how history is internalized and reconstructed. In this Age of the Internet time is flat-lined; when history disappears subjectivity shrinks, reduced to sensation. That is why in the method of *currere* regression is first: self-shattering through reactivation of the past, in the service of understanding more precisely and expansively the present, the historical-subjective moment each of us inhabits, together. "The importance of regressing," Mary Aswell Doll knows, "cannot be overstated: it is the first principle of re-cognizing the self in a way that will enlighten public activity." Regression can conclude in subjective synthesis, the last phase of *currere*, before regression begins again. Synthesis is a moment of subjective coherence—even resolve—<sup>6</sup>embodied in that instant one enters the classroom decoded as the commons. To enter the public (hopefully) one has departed a room of one's own, as Doll notes: "The work from within is necessarily solitary, requiring space and time away from distraction and noise." For Mary Aswell Doll and me, articulating that solitude in public has meant teaching Virginia Woolf and Richard Wright and, for her Samuel Beckett.<sup>7</sup> Forty-five years ago, I was searching for a method by which I could study solitude, that inwardness enabling educational experience.



"A questing curriculum and complexity theorist," William Doll juxtaposes Edgar Morin and me, noting that during the same decade, we were both embarked on a "search" for a method. Not "one based not on certainty and equanimity"—the conceptualization of "method" William Doll definitively dismisses—<sup>8</sup>"but on uncertainty and disorder, occurring simultaneously. This is a turbulent, chaotic, and uncertain cosmos in which we live." The method of *currere* acknowledges but attempts to contradict that fact. Doll detects one difference between my work and Morin's, namely that in elaborating "the relation between object and subject," my emphasis is on the subjective, the Being of a subject," while "Morin focuses on the subject encased within a system." Encased within a system is what the method of *currere* can help one try to escape. Doll "recognizes the trap of looking at the world using only a system lens." As Doll attributes to Morin but which also reflects his own thinking, "there must not be an annihilation of the whole by the parts, nor of the parts by the whole." For all three of us, Doll suggests, "the individual, the person, the subject is key."

Certainly the subject is key, especially in the work of Madeleine R. Grumet, who sought to study "the ways a particular person encounters a world coded in the academic disciplines situated in school." Her questions led to her essays in our *Toward a Poor Curriculum*, the third edition of which was released in 2015. "To this day," she writes, "I know that what I write will be lifeless unless I bracket what I think is expected of me and emerge, to become present to the material, to locate myself in the work." Grumet labored to articulate "the specificity and plurality of subjectivity as it appeared in our autobiographical accounts of educational experience; the sensuality and worldliness of lived experience, and the politics of disclosure." The phrase *the politics of presence* reminds that our struggle is both temporal and spatial—"politics literally take place," she notes. "It is ironic," Grumet points out, "that we were asked to announce our attendance in school, declaring 'present' when it was absence that was required of us." As lived, "curriculum is," Grumet argues, "should be, always contested as citizens struggle over what matters, what is worthy of their children's attention and effort. . . . The politics of education require us to be present, known, and named." The running of the course means muscle, then, and not only the literal kind, but subjective assertion—synthesis if you will—of care, conviction, commitment, expressed through study and teaching.

Care, conviction, commitment are reciprocally related, and not only to each other. To articulate *relation* Donna Trueit turns to the OED. Among the definitions I would underline is "contrast between different things." I offer "juxtaposition" as a curricular construct that emphasizes the articulation of such contrast, enabling us to focus on the distinctiveness of difference, the primacy of particularity, all the while affirming their relationality.<sup>9</sup> That same emphasis is evident in the next definitional phrase Trueit reports: "a particular way in which one thing or idea is connected or associated with another or others." "Relation," then, is no standard design of the items or locations

or personages connected. It is precisely the lived specificity of “relationship” that “interactive” online curriculum cannot provide and that embodied existentially existing teachers can.

Relationship binds us together, often through emotion. “[T]he challenge of interpreting illegible emotional life to welcome the curriculum yet to come,” Deborah P. Britzman writes (although not in this order), invites “curricular cathexis.” Such binding is Ted Aoki’s bridge that is not a bridge, suspending us as we linger, maybe even repeat, as Britzman recommends: “*Read again, but this time with feeling.*” Read as if one’s life depended upon it, or at least as if one’s lovemaking did: reading as a form of foreplay? Writing comes next, writing that can be allegorical, can convey, as Britzman writes, “the right to a symbolic as the minimum condition for the right to an everyday.” Looking for the symbolic—for allegory and other lost languages—requires movements of memory, reactivating the feeling that shrouds the fact that returns disguised. Britzman understands: “*Currere*, after all, is a turn toward the subject,” in its non-coincidence with itself, a prerequisite perhaps for “a dissonant education.”

A dissonant education is on Petra Munro Hendry’s mind too, as she continues “weaving relationships across time, space, and place.” She suggests that “history without time is what makes possible a complicated conversation.” Despite the complexities of historical contextualization, reading—with feeling (as Britzman reminds)—Ida B. Wells (as Hendry has) makes her “revelations . . . haunting,” as Denise Taliaferro Baszile knows. “As a form of ethics,” Hendry writes, “there is a responsibility to participate in conversation.” For her, “writing is this complicated conversation . . . the primary way that I study.” In fact writing “is about the process of constructing a life that is fully human.” Such humanity comprises cosmopolitanism, a state of mind that comes from “local, embodied, and subjective experience,” experience that is “always” worldly. “Through writing as study,” Hendry explains, “subjectivity becomes reconstructed.”<sup>10</sup> She adds: “We are in and of the world, dwelling, lingering, and with a responsibility to engage our humanity.” Such engagement starts in the study, where, one recognizes, “writing as study is the active agency or creative act of subjectivity.”

Agency and creativity materialize in the writing—and painting—of Rita L. Irwin. I am reminded of William Doll’s concept of “recursion” when Irwin suggests “we need to return to *currere* over and over again . . . reimagining *currere* in our contemporary times.” Irwin enacts these multiple movements in her remembrance of the painting with which she welcomed me to the University of British Columbia in 2005. I too feel, in Irwin’s words, “a rush of feelings and memories from that particular fall day.” Through “visual explorations,” she reports, “I portrayed the qualities of experience I felt and imagined that day, and the days following. . . . Each is an excursion into heightened engagement.” When walking into her studio, Irwin is “struck by remnants and markings of previous paintings,” rekindling her “need to create, my need to care for the urge to create.” Like my need to study—to read

and write, as Hendry describes—Irwin’s need to create seems simultaneously solitary and social, as she is in “constant conversation” with her materials, with loved ones, with herself. Like the space(s) where I work, when she leaves her studio she leaves a conversation unfinished, to be resumed when she returns: “I am always aware of this creative yet sometimes subversive space in my home.” That space is her studio, one’s study, above all a room of one’s own, inner space “in the presence of maples.”

Like Irwin, Celeste Snowber has felt how “embodied expressive relationship to the natural world has the capacity to shift our perceptions and understandings to our own autobiographical stories and the world.” Each of us, she suggests, has been summoned by “place and its particularity,” from where Snowber explores “how one is called from a place and continues a long journey to see both its impact and imaginative beckoning on a life.” Such impact—perhaps like the influence Süsskind sought—is unquantifiable, a matter of imagination, as we see what is not yet, or what was once, (t)here. Like the medieval mystics Petra Munro Hendry depicts in her *Engendering Curriculum History*, Snowber too finds the sacred in embodiment. “Ultimately as a dancer,” she tells us, “I am having a conversation not only with my hands, but feet, and this conversation extends to the natural world.” That “conversation,” she emphasizes, “is not only with ourselves and one another but with the sensate world.” What we see on shore has been washed up there, symbolizing “the relationality between history and the present,” revealed by “listening to the voice of creation, which holds more than we know.”

Between past and present, “place houses a most elusive temporality,” Brian Casemore confirms. It is, he suggests, available to us through stories. But stories keep secrets, “what we cannot bear to know.” Casemore invokes a tradition—psychoanalysis—<sup>11</sup> that “reveals ruptures, displacements, and overdeterminations of meaning that mark and therefore enable the exploration of an unconscious past that profoundly shapes the present.” Searching through such elusive clues, he suggests, enables us “to reanimate place with our understanding of its lost histories.” Place becomes “a threshold into social history, personal memory, and unconscious process.” Through “free associative writing,” Casemore studies the “ambivalence” of the objects that occupy place. Their “subjective resonance” then becomes “legible.” Place becomes “a *subjective site* calling for our continual reengagement and reconstruction.” Such subjective labor requires regression, as Casemore notes (like Baszile), the reactivation of “terrors, traumas, and unforeseen associations.” These are both private and public—as the history of lynching testifies—“revealing the way regional histories and myths shape the psyche of the nation,” registered in “the way autobiography (particularly through the example of African-American writers) can excavate and hold conditions of otherness,” internalized subjectively, expressed socially, enacted in “an ongoing process of subjective emplacement.” Encased in place, we seek escape from what entombs us.

This corner of Canaan (as Whitlock entitled her 2007 study of the American South) “demands to be unpacked,” emptied of its contents, among them

“gender, sexuality, race, and fundamentalist Christianity.” Whitlock wonders “what understanding curriculum as theological text might look like in a twenty-first-century world?” Whitlock appreciates that the ongoing educational “crisis” in the United States is “a moral and spiritual one,” but that fact prompts her not to call for yet more “reform,” the ever-increasing use of the new technologies. Prophetically, Whitlock calls upon us to “speak a radical language of love,” one that is “queered.” Here is an instance of Britzman’s “dissonant education,” as “radical love [that] is queer intentionally undermines the normative.” Undermining the normative is what I had in mind in my 2006 effort to develop curriculum for teacher education in a multicultural society; Whitlock suggests *Race, Religion and a Curriculum of Reparation* is also a methodology for Queer Theology. Like Irwin’s landscapes, this curricular collage remains an opportunity to walk into a clearing where whiteness does not blend into the background, but discloses itself as a curse of the covenant. No Sunday school story, Whitlock notes wryly, understanding curriculum as queer theological text pitches a different kind of tent, one holding a queer theory-theology experience revival, “shattering boundaries and God-talk.”

Evidently whites still need reminding that black lives matter, a fact made fiction as black culture and history are replaced by STEM. Such curriculum, Peter Taubman understands exactly, “turns the question of identity into questions of success and vaporizes identity, itself, into a set of entrepreneurial skills or their lack.” Students “are simply human capital, de-contextualized social identities or data that can be managed, marketed, and rendered fungible.” Entrepreneurs offer opportunity to kids with “grit,” who can do what they’re told no matter what they think. “Because everyone is equal in the eyes of the standards,” Taubman writes (with the appropriate ocularcentric imagery), “and every student can learn, diversity and individuality exist only as empty categories.”

Surely things must be better somewhere else, I thought, as I tried to wake up from the nightmare that was the present. Canadian curriculum, Terry Carson reminds, has been “less activist in its ambitions to shape society through schools.” Public education in Canada is not politicized on the federal level—as in the United States—remaining, as constitutionally required, a provincial matter. Carson notes that Anglo-Canadians have sometimes looked to the United States for educational ideas, but “the scope for radical individualist change is tempered by a more collectivist attitude in Canadian society,” the historical formation of which he attributes to Canadians’ preoccupations with “cultural and physical survival.” This “legacy of concern for survival in Canadian national consciousness” translated into a “basic faith in public institutions to serve the public good in Canada, accounting, Carson suggests, “for the fact that public education is still relatively well funded in Canada, with the vast majority of children continuing to attend public schools that enjoy a measure of trust and public confidence.” Carson concludes: “The fact that Canadian education been spared the level of professional subjugation described by Pinar in *What Is Curriculum Theory?* might be attributed to Canadian history and culture.”

Understanding curriculum requires such contextualization. As an interdisciplinary field, “our work”—as Marla Morris reminds—requires attention to scholarship outside the field. “Interdisciplinary thinking,” Morris knows, “requires us to explore fields other than our own in order to better understand curriculum.” Cultivating such thinking commits curriculum scholars to work “continually . . . systematically studying books and articles in our field and keeping up with new literatures as they are published.” The disciplinary conversation is constantly changing, but intellectual advancement requires that we link what has been said before *alongside*—in *relation* to—present preoccupations. “One must know one’s home field,” Morris appreciates, “before leaping into other fields. Most importantly, one must be rigorous when studying both one’s home field and other fields.” Such study, Morris suggests, exhibits “a dialectical relation between disciplinary and interdisciplinary work,” as we move “back and forth” between “home turf” and “other fields,” enacting a “productive tension” that can contribute to the intellectual advancement of the field.<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps engaging with the intellectual histories and present circumstances colleagues face in other countries might provoke the “productive tension” at home that might advance a U.S. field stuck in the muck of identity politics.<sup>13</sup> Providing one such intellectual history has been the project of Tero Autio, explicating “the long and strong European roots in American thinking,” from Dewey’s Hegelianism—like Marx’s—that left them “critical about German Idealism.” Autio notes my efforts to recuperate elements of that dismissed idealism—among them “the primacy of the particular” and “working from within”—by which I affirm intention as well as outcome, intrinsic importance as well as practical value. Abandon progressivism I do not, as Autio appreciates, noting that “the recurring question of the subject” is for me also a political and pragmatic question, a matter of “subjective transformation and social reconstruction,” both terms recontextualizations (as Autio notes) of Dewey’s pragmatism and of north European conceptions of *Bildung*.

Recontextualization may be the main dynamic of internationalization, as Autio appreciates, referencing contemporary curriculum reform in China. “The reactivated legacy of Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism through curriculum studies,” Autio writes, may also “reactivate the European educational landscape,” now marred by accountability, standardization and privatization measures” that have “been exhausting the project of the Enlightenment and its democratic drivers: liberty, equality and solidarity.” He concludes: “Neoliberal democracy is an oxymoron indeed.”

Contemporary curriculum reform in China is now threatened, Zhang Hua reports, by “the copulation between corporate capitalism and information technology, and the school-as-business model.” In China too, there is now the threat of “disappearing students and teachers in cyberspace.” Yes, “the thoughts and understandings of teachers and students are the core of any curriculum,” a fact that does not sideline but substantiates academic knowledge, as students and teachers must have something worthwhile<sup>14</sup> to

think about. Because “conversation means ethical engagement with alterity,” Zhang Hua suggests, it “also reconceptualizes curriculum development,” threaded not procedurally and organizationally but intellectually and creatively through ongoing academic self-study, itself “the eternal interaction among lived experience, life world, and subject matter.”

Such study encourages subjective presence—as Madeleine Grumet affirms—threaded through concepts others have formulated first, inviting conversation among those present and absent, as Hendry notes. As “a discursive practice,” the concept of conversation, as Zhang Hua points out, “reconstructs teaching,” as it emphasizes “orality”—embodied, expressive, engaged—“dialogical encounter between teachers and students, mediated by subject matter and life world.” I recall Jacques Daignault’s concept of “composition” when Zhang Hua writes: “If written texts are musical notes, teaching is singing and songs; and teaching-singing is also music-composing.” Creativity combines with constraint to make conversation lively, animated in part by questioning.

“*What internationalization is of most worth?*” José Augusto Pacheco asks, echoing the canonical curriculum question. It is one’s own, Hongyu Wang answers. Acknowledging that categories are contingent—among them “intellectual histories” and “present circumstances”—I engaged scholar-participants in five countries in questions, requesting clarification, a simple sequence that offered opportunities to contest categories and critically engage one’s own situatedness. As Pacheco acknowledges, I called for conversation as a “bridge between the social and subjective,” between “public and private,” and between “national, regional, and global.” Intertwined but not fused, these categories, like curricula themselves, may begin elsewhere even when they are learned at home. Learn them we can, if only to reconstruct them, providing passage to futures we cannot foresee.

Those futures are personal and private even as they occur in historical time, itself threatened by the technological destruction of the planet. Against the anonymity of modernity, working from within, as Pacheco understands, represents “a continuous valorization of the personal versus the social.” As her answer above suggests, subjectivity is a site shared by Hongyu Wang. “[T]he term internationalization seemed too grand for me,” Wang admits, “as I was (and still am) more interested in the specificity of personhood as it engages the world, whether at the local, the national, or the global level.” It is there—“at this site of specificity” as she puts it—our commitments converge, conceiving of the internationalization of curriculum studies as a complicated conversation, thereby “connect[ing] the autobiographical and the global.” In my efforts to understand curriculum as international, I started with life history interviews, underscoring specific persons’ engagement in their nationally embedded fields.

Hongyu Wang participated in the projects in South Africa and India, engaging in sustained conversations with the scholar-participants. These exchanges were instances of internationalization: complicated conversation

among scholars committed sometimes to the same concepts that disclosed different meanings. For instance, *deliberation* is a key curriculum concept in both the United States and India, but their meanings differ. Engagement in such dialogical encounter across borders was also an opportunity for the scholar-participants to achieve distance from their own situation, as Wang notes. Ethical engagement with alterity, Wang reminds, “nurtures a radical openness to the future.”

Not only for the subaltern might that be a future of progressive decolonization. “How does a diasporic subjectivity,” Nicholas Ng-A-Fook asks, “begin to decolonize their lived experiences as autobiographical research?” Invoking Aoki, Ng-A-Fook knows that “lingering and theorizing within the poetics of hyph-e-nated spaces . . . both binds and divides.” With echoes of Deleuze as well as Spivak, he suggests that “playing, theorizing, and narrating life histories of hyph-e-nated subjectivities becoming international, affords us opportunities to understand the contradictions, paradoxes, and theoretical assumptions active at the edges of the hyphen.” In doing so he complicates my concept of subjective reconstruction, detailing movements within and outside subjectivity, movements enabling educational experience. It was through his efforts to understand “the United Houma Nation’s past and present circumstances in Louisiana” that Ng-A-Fook experienced his own decolonization, “the possibility of reconciling past, present, and future Indigenous and non-Indigenous inter-national relations. For me, this is the hyph-e-nated subject of becoming international.”

“Becoming international,” then, can proceed regressively, progressively, analytically, synthetically. For Mary Aswell Doll, the method of *currere* is “complicated,” which (etymologically) means “folded longitudinally one or more times, as the wings of certain insects: to fold together.” While I stress the stages or phases of the method—in another era when the past and future do not fuse I might not emphasize their distinctiveness—but such sequencing hardly simplifies. As she notes, “complicated” itself means “involved, tangled, knotty.” That temporal and autobiographical structure of *currere* informs my theory of curriculum, she appreciates, showing “how a conversation unravels itself many times, one thought after another, forming knots (or insect wings).” That evocative image is embedded in “palimpsest,” a term, Doll reminds, that means “writing that is erased to make room for another text.” The two images fold together, like “the wings of the insect, folded now so as to allow flight. This is the tangle that conversation must unravel.”

Like Mary Aswell Doll, Peter P. Grimmett invokes the “human soul.” When one’s worldview is “shallow and naïve,” he suggests, one becomes “ethically trammled.” Grimmett continues: “Just as a logjam is released by raising the water level, so our dealings with the Other are compelled toward ethicality by a complicated worldview that arises from a complicated conversation.” How can we fill our worldview? Grimmett knows: “Study, then, is central to self-formation,” and it “arises from our appropriation of what is around us in the world; study builds our capacity for making choices,

for developing focus, for exercising critical judgment that is so central to a well-formed character." Acknowledging study as the site of education can seem to sideline teaching, but Grimmert knows otherwise, affirming that "study as the site of education provokes us to grapple with what constitutes pedagogy." Grimmert distinguishes between "a pedagogical focus" and a "curriculum one," the former focused on "how teachers can address the content indirectly," avoiding "the instrumentalist trap." That seems a sensible distinction to make, even if I locate pedagogy within curriculum, pedagogy as (a primary) part of the conversation. So subsumed, the "how" question fades; improvisation predominates. Those in supervisory capacities can try to be helpful—recall the association between supervision and curriculum development U.S. progressives made six decades ago, entombed now in ASCD—and so it is that Peter Grimmert is reactivating the past when he underlines "understanding" teachers' creating classroom activities in the service of study. In Canada this aspiration remains imaginable.

Now that the school as a public institution in the United States is endangered, many—including Alan A. Block—testify to its value. Fifty years ago (despite Sputnik), there seemed little danger: the school seemed sacrosanct, if in need of reform. In the 1960s, I focused on socialization in school; sometimes it seemed a form of bullying.<sup>15</sup> There was little bullying then—at least in my central Ohio public schools—but conformity could be crushing. Reading R.D. Laing in graduate school provided me a vocabulary for understanding what had made of me. It was the school-as-socialization that had been maddening; often teachers were victims too. Encased in the system, Block asks (with his characteristic humor): "What *was* a teacher to do?" What was anybody to do? I stressed "working from within," for me, teaching high school English (just a peninsula away from him on the northshore of Long Island, not knowing each other at the time), listening as carefully as I could to what students said during open-ended conversations concerning the novels, short stories, and poems we read seemed a start. I encouraged them to write autobiographically, what soon after became formalized as "reader-response." Not buried in busywork—lessons plans, so-called standards, etc.—I could focus on the recurring question of the subject. Not so now, as Block notes: "Today, we measure educational success by the pulse of the American economy and the rise and fall of standardized test scores. It is a measure of madness."

In such an awful time one listens to those not only in front but in back of us, as Denise Taliaferro Bazile knows, "ghosts" who remain with us, "the remnants of ideas . . . the residue of trauma." *Currere* calls upon us "to recognize hauntings and to confront ghosts," Bazile understands, "the trauma of the ever-present racialized past." This year's (2015) police violence provides yet another episode of "haunting," precipitating an "undoing" that leaves Bazile with "pieces of ideas and memories wondering and wandering around in my head and my heart." The murdered and mutilated, she reminds, "are begging for something, something different, something powerful,



something more meaningful to be done.” Faced with “pressing questions” of *what* and *how* leaves her “tumbling back into reflection and re-memory, struggling to make connections between haunting revelations.” To teach “the deep structure of a haunting”—the lynching of Emmett Till—Baszile “juxtapose[s] theory, history, and literature and ponder their reciprocal relations, where each gives new meaning to the other.” Reactivation of the past means becoming haunted in the present, feeling fidelity not only to one’s students, to ideas, to inquiry itself, but also to those whose presence—and absence—structures the complicated conversation that is the curriculum.

However cruel our present circumstances, we can continue to converse, among ourselves and with our students, animated by ideas we receive from the past, that we recontextualize and reconstruct according to futures we cannot foresee. We are obligated to continue that complicated conversation, as the curriculum—and the academic field that seeks to understand it—remain the centerpiece of education. It is conversation animated by those in our classrooms and by those we can longer see but by whom we are haunted: the murdered, our mentors, memories of moments in which what we studied shifted what we knew and could experience. The profundity of our profession calls upon us to continue. My heartfelt thanks to each of you for doing so.

## Notes

- 1 Unless otherwise indicated, all quoted passages come from this volume.
- 2 See Bateman, 1974.
- 3 See Huebner, 1999, 15.
- 4 See Klohr, 1974.
- 5 The term was still fresh in the 1970s and even a student of Thomas Kuhn—University of Rochester professor of history Theodore Brown—spoke at one of our conferences (see Brown, 1988).
- 6 My thanks to Jung-Hoon Jung for making this association.
- 7 See, for instance, Doll, 1988.
- 8 See Trueit, 2012.
- 9 In like manner, Janet Miller asserts an “ethical injunction to preserve those bonds of relationality because curriculum—whatever its conceptions—never stands alone.”
- 10 Educational experience is expansive, as William E. Doll, Jr. appreciates: “What happens to me as I go through the process of not just learning the material presented but of reflecting on myself as person.”
- 11 It is a tradition shared by other contributors to the collection, among them Alan Block, Deborah Britzman, Madeleine Grumet, and Peter Taubman.
- 12 Such tension could include “creative misinterpretation,” as Harold Bloom (1975, 93) implies: “If to imagine is to misinterpret . . . criticism then becomes a series of swerves after unique acts of creative misinterpretation.”
- 13 For which I am also responsible (Pinar, 2015, 176).
- 14 This is a term Zhang Hua has used elsewhere that resonates with the canonical curriculum question: What knowledge is of most worth?
- 15 “What is missing,” Macdonald (1995 [1964], 17) wrote, “is the dimension of personal responsiveness to the socialization process.”

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